The Beaver

SUMMER 1974

from sea to sea...

across the span

of three centuries

OURS IS A TRADITION OF SERVICE TO CANADIANS

Hudson's Bay Company

INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670

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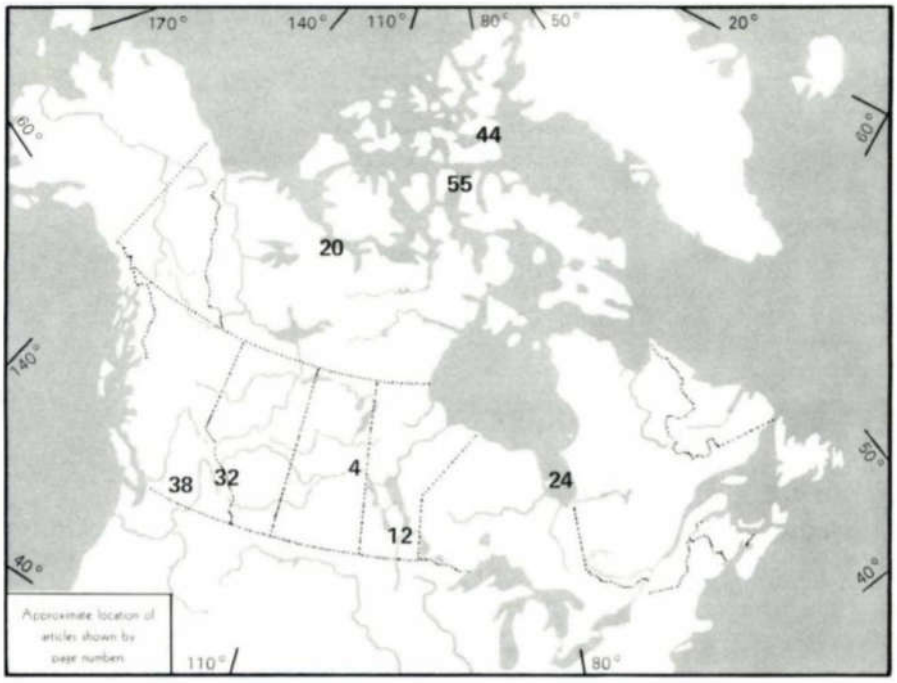

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COVER: The Black billed Magpie, a water colour by Robert Hood.

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Birds by Hood

Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker.

Recently discovered in the attic of a coach-house in Tipperary, Ireland and published here for the first time, these water-colours were done by Robert Hood at Cumberland House during the winter of 1819-1820. In Hood's presentation the winter birds are grouped together on two parchments. The waterfowl are depicted in two habitat scenes – undoubtedly the first to be painted from the western half of the continent.

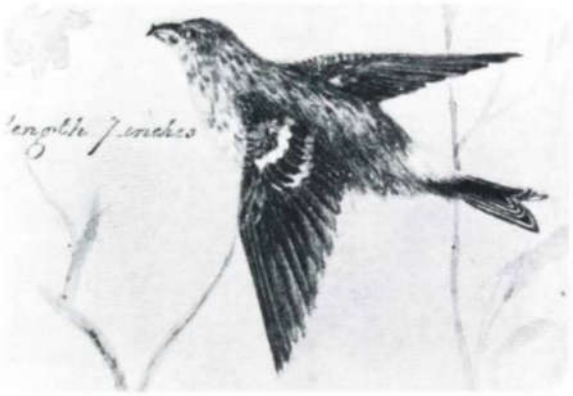
Evening Grosbeak.

The text is by Dr C. Stuart Houston, Professor of Diagnostic Radiology, University of Saskatchewan, and author of 'The Birds of the Saskatchewan River, Carlton to Cumberland' and 'To the Arctic by Canoe'. The latter is the journal and paintings of Robert Hood, Midshipman with the Franklin Expedition, 1819-1821, published jointly by the Arctic Institute of North America and McGill-Queen's University Press, 1974.

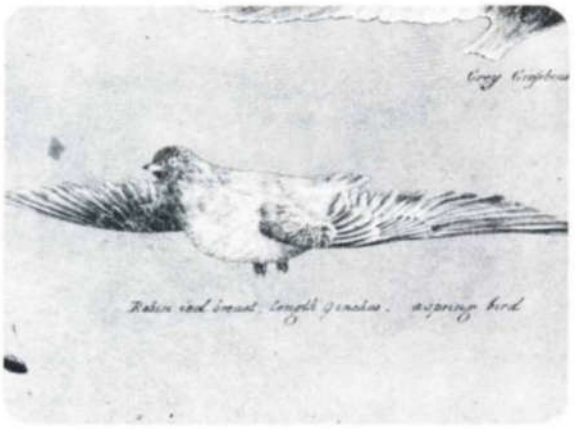
WHICH REGIONS OF THIS CONTINENT had the most complete inventories of wildlife 140 years ago? Most bird-watchers today would be surprised to learn that the Saskatchewan River section of the then remote 'fur countries' would have been one of the top three or four regions on any such list. The chief competitors would have been South Carolina and the Philadelphia area. South Carolina had the paintings of Mark Catesby, who published two volumes on natural history between 1731 and 1743. Philadelphia had the writings of Alexander Wilson, who published his nine-volume work on *American Ornithology* (the last two volumes posthumously) between 1803 and 1814. Saskatchewan had the records of the officers of the first two Franklin expeditions.

It seems paradoxical that these two admiralty expeditions undertaken by Franklin should have been involved in such long treks across land, for which they were ill-equipped and ill-prepared; that expeditions in search of an arctic Northwest Passage should have spent so much time so far from their goal; and that explorers should have spent so much energy in the study of natural history.

White-winged Crossbill.



But Britain was full of the spirit of adventure, the triumph of exploration, and the glory of Empire. The men of the Franklin expeditions risked their lives – and a number lost their lives – following the explicit directions of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty. In fact, Robert Hood, a promising young midshipman, one of two Eskimos, and no less than nine of eleven 'voyagers' were to perish on the tragic return trek of the first Franklin expedition from the Arctic.



American Robin.

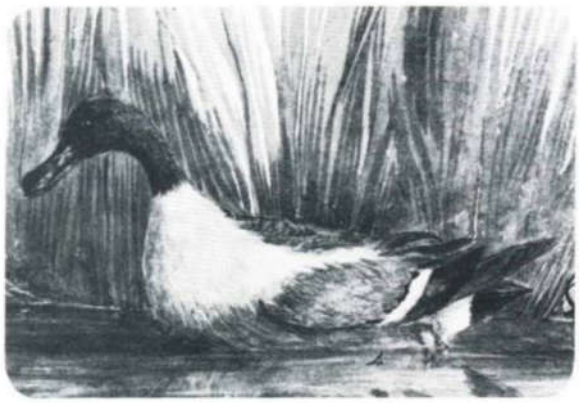
The two overland exploring expeditions led by John Franklin accurately mapped nearly two thousand miles of our northern coastline. Their two journals were further augmented by their later and subsidiary publications: four large volumes dealing with the mammals, birds, fish, and insects, the *Fauna Boreali-Americana*; and two large volumes describing the plants, the *Flora Boreali-Americana*.

Despite the fact that Marjorie Wilkins Campbell has spoken of the Saskatchewan as 'one of the greatest highways of discovery on the continent, perhaps in the entire world', these published contributions of its earliest naturalist-travellers were forgotten in all but a few museums and libraries in Europe and the eastern part of America. H. Hedley Mitchell, of the Saskatchewan Provincial Museum, in his *Birds of Saskatchewan* in 1924, stated that 'Probably the first knowledge we have of the ornithology of Saskatchewan was furnished by Captain Blakiston, who collected specimens at the old Fort Carlton and elsewhere in the Prince Albert region in 1858.' Mitchell cannot be criticized, for at that time there was not a single copy of either the *Fauna* or the *Flora Boreali-Americana* anywhere in Saskatchewan. The local ornithologists were ignorant of their great heritage, unaware that ten new kinds of birds had been first

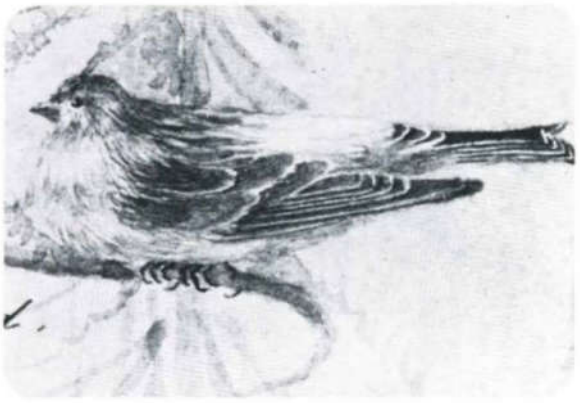
Robert Hood.

'After our usual supper of singed skin and bone soup, Dr. Richardson acquainted me with the afflicting circumstances attending the death of Mr. Hood [who, on the verge of starvation, had been shot by the interpreter, Michel] . . . His scientific observations together with his maps and drawings . . . evince a variety of talent, which, had his life been spared, must have rendered him a distinguished ornament to his profession.'

John Franklin, from his 'Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea.'

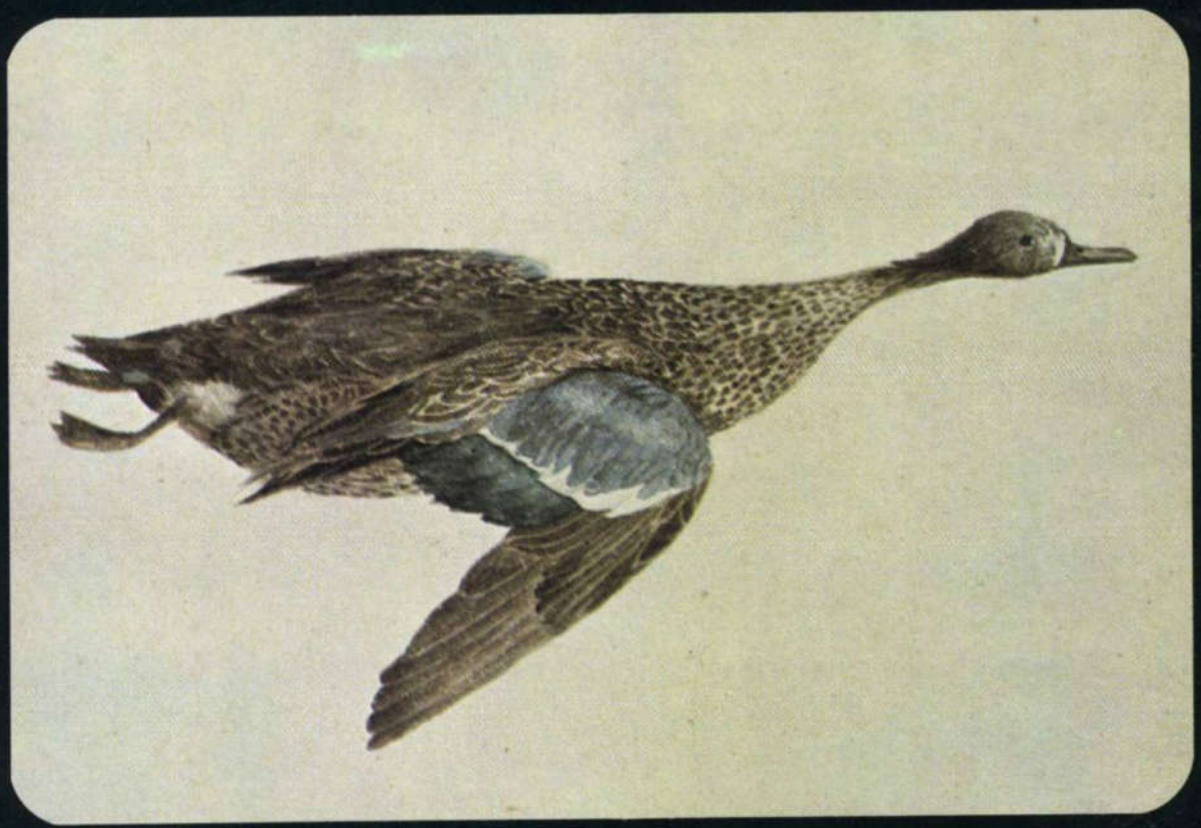


Shoveler.



Snow Bunting.

The H B C buildings at Cumberland House, Saskatchewan as they appeared in 1874.



Blue-winged Teal (male).

described from Carlton and Cumberland – making these the official 'type localities' for these birds.

Cumberland House, founded by Samuel Hearne as the first inland trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company (now Saskatchewan's oldest settlement) and Carlton House, the pemmican supply depot on the North Saskatchewan, were the main settlements at the time of both Franklin expeditions, in 1819-22 and 1825-27. The men of each Franklin expedition visited both places; here they collected most of their natural history specimens and here Hood painted many of his water-colours.

During the first Franklin expedition, Dr John Richardson and Robert Hood, the most knowledgeable and interested members with respect to ornithology, spent the first winter, 1819-20, at Cumberland House. Their precious specimens were apparently sent to York Factory the next summer with Governor William Williams of the Hudson's Bay Company who had just served his first winter at Cumberland House. This was an era of intense conflict between the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company. Williams that year took the difficult and little-used Minago route to avoid Grand Rapids where, as he correctly surmised, the opposing North West Company men were laying in wait to capture him – as they did Colin Robertson later that summer. The journey in birch-bark canoes, with carries over many portages, was an accepted hazard for all goods, but this was a particularly risky journey for the Franklin expedition's reports and specimens, well-protected in beaver skins as they may have been.

The new mammals in this collection, named for three of the four officers of the expedition, were the three ground squirrels: Saskatchewan's common gopher or flickertail, Richardson's ground squirrel; the bush gopher or Franklin's ground squirrel; and Hood's thirteen-striped ground squirrel. New to science, they were described and named by Joseph Sabine in the 1822 transactions of the Linnaean Society of London. Sabine also authored the Zoological Appendix to Franklin's *Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea* published in 1823.

The new bird descriptions from Cumberland House in this Zoological Appendix were of the Franklin's Gull, the Wilson's Phalarope and the Black-billed Magpie. As regards the gull, Sabine correctly noted the discrepancies between the specimen from Cumberland House and the published descriptions of its near relative, the Laughing Gull of the Atlantic coast. Yet he did not give it a Latin name. This discrepancy was rectified by Dr Richardson in volume two of *Fauna Boreali-Americana*, when he named it Franklin's Gull, *Larus franklinii*, in honour of his chief. These official names were used throughout the first three editions of the *American Ornithologists' Union Check-list* until in 1922 it was discovered that volume two of *Fauna Boreali-Americana,* contrary to its frontispiece date of 1831, had not been published until 1832. Wagler's *Isis von Oken*, which did appear in 1831 and which described a specimen of the same gull from Mexico, thus was given the priority, with the consequent change of the scientific name to *Larus pipixcan*.

As a digression, we may note that the delay in publication was not Dr Richardson's fault, for he had his portion of the manuscript ready in 1830. It was his co-author and artist, William Swainson, who caused the delay of a year and a half, while he tried to force all species of North American birds into his contrived 'natural arrangement' of zoological classification. Swainson was simply in the wrong field; had he been in chemistry, he might well have antedated Mendeleyev by 38 years in constructing a periodic table.

The Wilson's Phalarope, named for the Scottish emigrant to the United States, was not collected by Wilson. Sabine, grateful for the help provided by Wilson's *American Ornithology* in cataloguing the birds sent home by Richardson and Hood, had named the new species *Phalaropus wilsoni*. As with Franklin's Gull, the vernacular name provided by Sabine is still in use today, but the scientific name lasted only until 1884, when it was discovered that Vieillot had earlier described this species from Paraguay. The phalarope collected at Cumberland House was in 'breeding plumage', but in those days no one knew that among phalaropes it is the female that wears the bright dress while the dull-plumaged male carries out the incubation.

The third new bird was the Black-billed Magpie. Noting its differences from the European magpie, Sabine called it the Hudson's Bay Magpie, as it had been collected in the Hudson's Bay Company territories – an excellent example of how vague a geographic designation was the term, 'Hudson's Bay'. In the 1820s, the magpie was common and stayed all winter on the Saskatchewan River, though it occasionally strayed to the eastward of Lake Winnipeg. Perhaps coincident with the decrease in the buffalo, its numbers then diminished drastically, so that most of the early settlers from seventy to one hundred years later saw no magpies at all. When in the 1930s the magpie increased again and spread across settled Saskatchewan from the southwest, most people thought it a new arrival – unaware that it had been first described from Cumberland House.

This was, until recently, our knowledge of the new ornithological discoveries by the first Franklin expedition. Imagine my excitement four years ago, when I learned of the existence of Hood's original journal, chronicling the events of this expedition as far as the Coppermine. This journal and a collection of Hood's paintings had lain neglected in a box in the attic of a coach-house in Tipperary, Ireland, for a great many years. When, after the death of the grand-daughter of Robert Hood's sister, the family estate was closed, these materials were almost thrown out, along with other objects of lesser value. By good fortune, Mrs. R. G. Birch, the wife of the relative closing out the estate, recognized their significance. The long confinement in a dark box

was actually a blessing, for it helped ensure preservation of the beautiful water-colours. The journal and paintings are now being preserved by her sons, all of whom now reside in western Canada.

Hood's journal, with sixteen of the paintings reproduced in colour, and eight in black-and-white, is being published this summer (1974) by the Arctic Institute of North America and McGill-Queen's University Press. The book is entitled *To the Arctic by Canoe.*

This journal and the paintings contribute much to our knowledge of the bird life of Cumberland House and add another chapter to the story of Saskatchewan ornithology. They enhance our appreciation of Hood's artistic ability and his scientific aptitude, the attributes no doubt responsible for his appointment to the expedition. His fellow midshipman, George Back, was also talented at painting scenery, but Hood in addition to his painting of more varied subjects, seems to have been the more skilled or more interested of the two in mapping and in recording of magnetic and climatic observations. Another secondary task assigned to the expedition was the study of the *aurora borealis*, and this fell to Dr Richardson and Robert Hood.

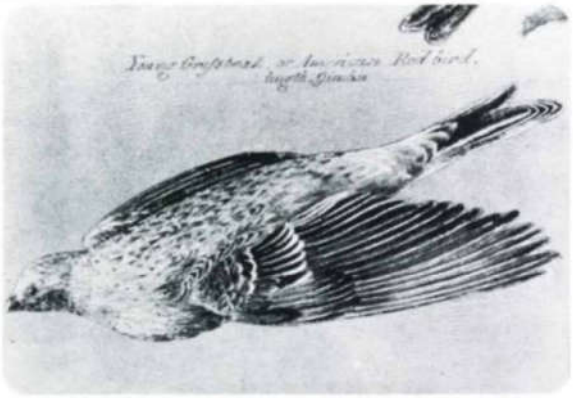
We can appreciate Hood's accomplishments even more if we reflect on the conditions under which they were achieved. Their makeshift log dwelling at Cumberland House – 'the interstices being choaked up with mud' and with 'windows of moose skin parchment' – was hurriedly constructed. Hood records how the Cree Indians, when drunk, 'thundered at the parchment windows, and pleased with this acquisition of noise, their hands continued mechanically to produce it, after the power of utterance had failed.' He also states that, in spite of a blazing stone fireplace, they could warm only one side of their bodies at a time, while his 'pens and brushes were frozen to the paper'.

Hood's paintings of the winter birds at Cumberland House add five birds to the list then known to science. Had his water-colours been published when they reached London, and the species been given appropriate scientific names, all five would have had scientific priority. Four more species would now list Cumberland House, Saskatchewan, as their 'type locality'; the Black-billed Magpie alone achieved that status. Hood's 1820 paintings illustrate four other species which for technical reasons are not accredited as official 'firsts'.

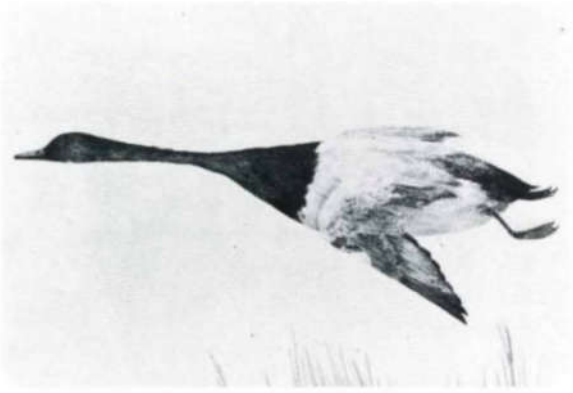
The Yellow-headed Blackbird specimen which Hood painted, reached London but was 'irrecoverably lost' after its arrival there. That same month, May 1820, the Rocky Mountain expedition of Major Stephen Long, exploring the Louisiana Purchase, also collected a specimen of this blackbird near the present site of Fullerton, Nebraska; the latter became the type locality after the record was published in 1825 by Charles Lucien Bonaparte, a nephew of the Emperor Napoleon.

The Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker specimen must also have been lost for it was not described by Sabine in the appendix of Franklin's journal in 1823. A

Pine Grosbeak.



Canvasback.



second specimen was then collected near Jasper in the Rocky Mountains by Thomas Drummond, Richardson's assistant naturalist on the second Franklin expedition of 1825-27, so that the Athabasca headwaters in present-day Alberta became the type locality.

The Hoary Redpoll, with its white rump, was not to be described until 1843 by the Danish naturalist, Holboell, from Greenland.

The Evening Grosbeak, both the bright-coloured adult male and a sombre grey juvenile female depicted by Hood, was called the *seesebasquit-pethaysish* by the Crees. Father Lacombe's 1874 Cree-French dictionary gave *sisipaskwat* for 'maple sugar' and *piyesis* for 'little bird', hence this translates as 'sugar-bird'. It then was relatively rare with a much smaller range than it enjoys today – and on the Second Franklin expedition, Richardson was unable to collect an additional specimen. At his request, J.P. Pruden, the Hudson's Bay Company factor at Carlton House, was able to obtain another male specimen in 1829 and forward it to London just in time for its painting by Swainson to be included in *Fauna Boreali-Americana*. Meanwhile, another grosbeak of this species had been shot by an Indian boy with his bow and arrow on 7 April 1823; when described in an 1825 publication by William Copper, its locality of Sault Ste Marie, Michigan, achieved scientific priority.

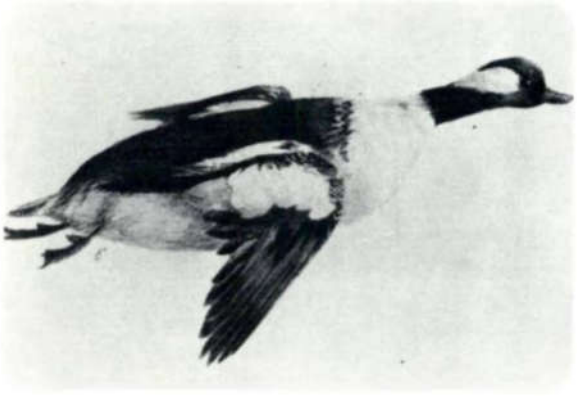
In his first painting of the winter birds at Cumberland House, Hood included a juvenile and an adult male of the White-winged Crossbill, a Sharp-tailed Grouse, a Black-capped Chickadee, and a Snow Bunting. The second painting illustrated the Willow Ptarmigan, Pine Grosbeak, and one of the first spring arrivals, the American Robin.

Hood's waterfowl habitat scenes, undoubtedly the first to be painted from the western half of the continent, are also noteworthy. The first illustrates the Bufflehead, Canvasback, Marsh Duck or Lesser Scaup, Shoveler, and Red-breasted Merganser; the second depicts the Blue-winged Teal, Red-necked Grebe, Mallard, and the Wood Duck, the latter still a rare species in Saskatchewan.

Hood's paintings of wildlife compare very favourably with those of the established bird painters of that time, prior to Audubon and Gould. At that time, the art of bird painting had been mastered by few men. There can be no argument that Hood's initial efforts in this difficult new area showed great promise.

Hood's memory is already perpetuated by a flower, the moss phlox, *Phlox hoodii*, by the thirteen-striped ground squirrel, *Citellus tridecemlineatus hoodii*, and by the mighty Hood River that plunges over Wilberforce Falls before it enters the Arctic Ocean. Publication this summer of his narrative and his previously unpublished paintings will be a further memorial to the name and achievements of Robert Hood – midshipman, narrator, explorer, scientist, and artist. ◆

Bufflehead.



Yellow-headed blackbird.

The Métis and Canadien Councillors of Assiniboia

BY LIONEL DORGE

Author of 'Introduction a l'étude des Franco-Manitobains', Mr Dorge has a particular interest in the history of the Métis and Canadiens.

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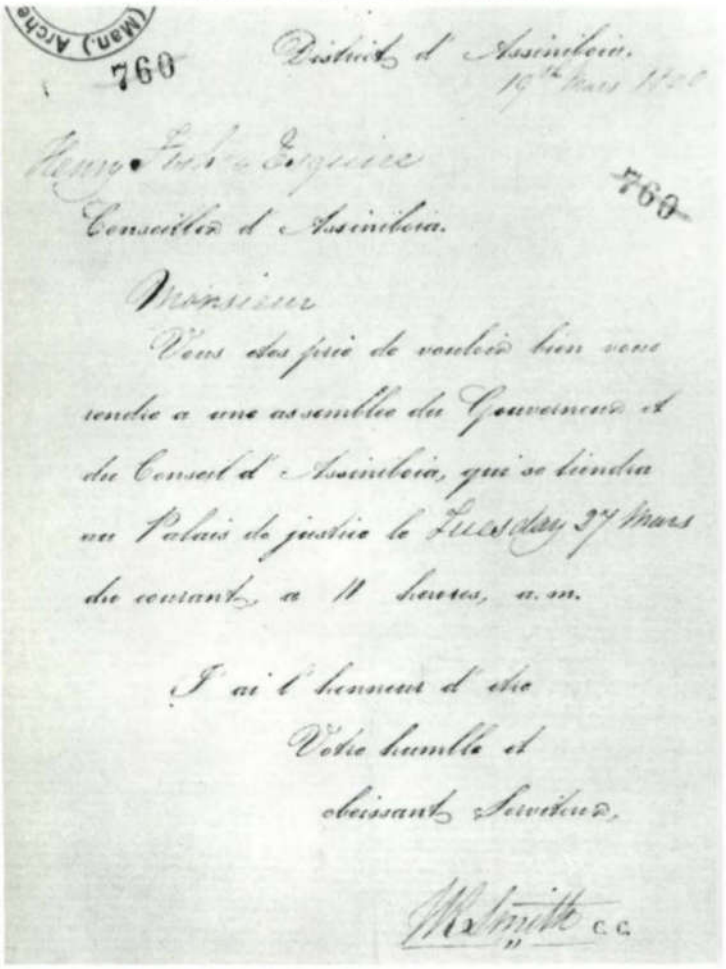
Dated 1860, this is the oldest surviving printed invitation to a meeting of the Council of Assiniboia. It is significant in the history of the printed word in Western Canada.



Part 1

THE CLERICAL PHASE

WHY CONSIDER AS AN ISOLATED GROUP the French-speaking members of the Council of Assiniboia? By dealing only with these members – although they did not vote or act as a group – it becomes apparent that they, whether cleric or lay, did not merely acquiesce in affairs of state. They actively, even boisterously, led the way in the discussion of various affairs of the Settlement, whether commerce or religion, agriculture or justice, industry or language, communications or transportation. Furthermore, prior to 1870 when the Council was disbanded, it governed a predominantly French-speaking population. Its evolution from a ruling to a governing body was largely the result of circumstances and events that took place in the communities of the Métis and Canadiens.

The continuous existence of the Council dates, it has been claimed, from the arrival in 1822 of Andrew Bulger as Governor of Assiniboia. Its life can be considered in two parts; before and after 1835.

Prior to 1835, while the government of Assiniboia was a proprietary one, the Council never exceeded seven members. They were usually chosen according to their attitude towards the Hudson's Bay Company which had jurisdiction over the vast area called Rupert's Land. Assiniboia, that area within a fifty-mile radius of the forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, formed part of this territory. During the initial period of the Council's life there were no Métis representatives. Neither was there a representative of the Canadiens (this form is used rather than Canadian because during the period under consideration the form French-Canadian was seldom used and 'Canadian' was meant to designate a French-speaking inhabitant usually of Lower Canada).

The absence of representatives from the Métis who made up the majority of the population of Assiniboia can best be explained by the European origin of the Council. Members participating in its deliberations were drawn from the more learned, the more stable, the more sophisticated – that is, the more European – portion of the population. This is not to say that the Métis were less advanced or more primitive than their Caucasian or Indian forbears. If they were placed on the more or less accepted socio-economic ladder of white society, the Métis who were more hunters than farmers would no doubt be one rung below many Europeans living in their midst. On the other hand their way of life was more industrial than agricultural placing them a rung above their neighbours.

The principal occupation of the Métis was hunting the buffalo, but the main purpose of the hunt was to supply the pemmican-making industry. Although not organized along the lines of a modern factory, the production of pemmican can probably be said to be the

first industry west of the Great Lakes. For several decades it would remain unsurpassed both in the number of people it employed and in the profits it yielded. To support this view, it need only be pointed out that for almost half a century it was the only currency-producing activity in the Red River Settlement where barter was the common method of trade.

As the agricultural pursuits of the Red River Settlement proved less and less able to provision the fur trade, the pemmican industry of the Métis established itself more firmly as the only producer able to do so. In the meantime, the Hudson's Bay Company (the main buyer of pemmican) in addition to its commercial monopoly, had resumed after 1835 its government monopoly over all of Rupert's Land, including the District of Assiniboia. The Company tried not to distinguish between the two monopolies, and avoided a distinction between the commercial and political governors. But with the growing economic importance of the Métis came a growing assertiveness on their part. Alexander Ross in his history of the Red River Settlement speaks of a 'spirit of disaffection' at this time to which news of the Papineau rebellion in Lower Canada 'added fresh fuel'. And so the complexion and composition of the Council changed.

After 1835 the number of councillors increased to fifteen. They were chosen according to their standing in the community, although this was not enough to ensure a commission. The case of Louis Riel senior comes to mind in this respect. Although much involved in public life and a popular figure among the Métis population, he had been an overt, if not confirmed, critic of the Company – and none of this ilk was ever to become a councillor of Assiniboia. Another fact may have militated against his nomination. Of all the French-speaking councillors, clerics excepted, only François Bruneau did not belong to the commercial life of the colony. He was a farmer who had never worked in any capacity for the Company. Riel, though not a farmer, had a similar background; he had not been associated with the fur trade in any of its forms, but rather came to be known as the Miller of the Seine. On the other hand, a man like Narcisse Marion, whose trading activities were in direct competition to those of the Company, eventually was sworn in as a councillor.

After 1835, partly as a result of the spirit of disaffection referred to by Ross, the Council sat more often and its affairs became less judicial and more legislative. At no time, however, did it become truly representative. To illustrate this it should be sufficient to note that the representation of the French-speaking element (more than half of the population) never held even a third of the seats. But it is not about this that the newspaper *The Nor'Wester* complained so bitterly during the 1860s when it continuously attacked the Council for not being representative. What the newspaper wanted was representation of a 'better sort' – specifically, representation of the 'Canadian party' whose objective was to annex Rupert's Land to Upper Canada and who could only with difficulty accept the growing political role of what it considered an alien population within the wished-for territory. The fear of the 'Canadian party' appears justified, if the minutes of the Council are any indication; the French-speaking members as time went on more than made up in activity what they lacked in numbers.

Councillor Joseph-Norbert Provencher in a portrait that probably was drawn in the 1820's. He arrived in Assiniboia in 1818 and was consecrated Bishop in 1822.

This was not immediately evident after the swearing in, first of Bishop Norbert Provencher on 16 June 1837 and then of Cuthbert Grant on 13 June 1839. (The latter, like several other Scottish half-breeds, had been assimilated by the Métis and was identified with the French-speaking community.) Both Provencher and Grant had attended earlier meetings – the former once and the latter twice – but on invitation. However, it was not the new councillors, but other changes made by the Council that could have generated increased interest among the Métis and Canadiens. A new court system was soon to call upon several Métis to serve as magistrates; of even more interest the police force, reorganized in 1835, consisted of sixty men of whom fifty-four were privates at a salary of six pounds sterling a year. A fair number of these men were to be taken from the French-speaking population, contributing to a feeling of greater participation in the affairs of the colony. Otherwise, between 1835 and 1843, the minutes of the

Council did not stress the presence of a Métis and a Canadien. Occasionally, Grant or Provencher would be mentioned; at the meeting of 20 March 1839 Grant was named sheriff, and at that of June 1840 Provencher was asked to distribute strychnine for the destruction of wolves in the area of the Forks. Generally speaking the activity of both men in Council was subdued. In the case of Provencher, at least, this was not surprising. He was, in his own words, a man preparing the future for others. To him this meant getting on with the building or the improving of facilities, not discussing better government or wider participation in it.

The petition, tabled in French, that brought about an increased demand for participation by the French-speaking community in running the colony was submitted by three men outside the Council. The petitioners, two of whom – Maximilien Genthon dit Dauphiné and François Bruneau – were later to become councillors, requested that those on the police force whose duties did not require much learning (that is, the fifty-four privates) be changed yearly so as to allow a greater number of inhabitants to serve and enjoy the advantage of a salary. The Council took advantage of the petition to review the whole police organization. Not only were the petitioners granted their request 'that half the number of Privates of Police be changed every other year', but this was to be done more democratically for 'the vacancies occasioned by such removals [were to] be filled up by ballot from each District of the Settlement, the parties eligible being householders under the age of fifty.' After the re-organization of the force two of the three sergeants were chosen for the first time from the Métis; they were J.P. Bourque and Louis Battoche.

The petition had also requested the establishment of a local distillery to create a market for the surplus grain grown in the colony. Coming from the Métis, this would seem to indicate that they were more involved in agriculture than is generally conceded. One of the Métis petitioners, François Bruneau, had, according to the census of the previous May, four acres of land under cultivation, a not inconsiderable amount at the time. Arrangements were made by the Council to meet the request.

Two years later at the meeting of 16 June 1845, it was the commercial activities of the Métis that came to the fore when a petition signed by (among others) Charles Larance, Dominique Ducharme, and Alexis Goulet, asked for the abolition of import duties on goods from the United States. The petition was answered in part at a meeting four days later when a revised list of tariffs and duties was implemented. On the same occasion many other regulations were passed that changed to some extent those in force since 1841. It was further resolved that copies of these be made available in both French and English and that they be read and explained in both languages 'at the meetings of the General Court in November and February of each year'. One of the regulations was aimed at making the colony more self-reliant. A Committee of Economy was appointed to encourage industry and agriculture in the colony. The committee submitted its first report on 31 May 1847 when it announced the arrival from England of a fulling mill to process locally produced cloth. It also expressed its appreciation to Provencher for having ordered from Lower Canada a carding machine of simple construction.

Maria Grant, wife of Councillor Pascal Breland and daughter of Councillor Cuthbert Grant and Sophie (?) Desmarais.

In the meantime a detachment of regular troops arrived at Red River, overtly to protect the colony against possible American encroachment. It appeared, however, that until its departure in 1848 it had served another purpose; to quiet a growing murmur among the Métis who were asking for more representation in civic affairs and a clarification between the commercial interests and the governmental responsibilities of the Hudson's Bay Company. This murmur became most audible in the spring of 1849 with the arrest of Guillaume Sayer for infringing the Company's fur-trade monopoly. Two weeks after the trial, on 31 May 1849, the Council of Assiniboia met to consider ways 'for the restoration of the tranquility of the Settlement'. It was agreed that the excitement had arisen from a desire on the part of the French-speaking inhabitants to obtain the removal of Recorder (or Judge) Adam Thom, a Francophobe who in a letter to George Simpson had expressed the opinion that the French (let alone the Métis or the Canadiens) possessed only one-hundredth of the intelligence and abilities of the Anglo-Saxons. They sought the appoint-

ment of a judge able and willing to conduct judicial proceedings in both French and English and also the appointment of Métis and Canadiens to 'a certain proportion' of the seats on the Council of Assiniboia.

The Council could only refer this last grievance to the Governor and Committee in London. Councillors were not expected to be without opinion on the question and at least one of them, Provencher, was asked to submit names of possible candidates; this duty he accepted somewhat reluctantly. The following is a translation of his letter dated 27 June 1849 and addressed to George Simpson, Governor of Rupert's Land.

I have talked openly, without calling a special meeting, about the nomination of new councillors. I did so as the hunters were gathered prior to their departure for the Plains. I have been led to believe that, in the opinion of the inhabitants most concerned, the following would be preferred, that is, among the Canadiens: Narcisse Marion and Maximilien Genthon dit Dauphiné, both from the Forks; among the Metis: François Bruneau and Salomon Hamelin, of the Forks, and Pascal Breland of the White Horse Plain. These are men of common sense able to judge soundly and to account for the decisions of the Council. I think everyone would have confidence in them, and so things will be more peaceful than in the past.

You told me I could present six names. As the aforementioned are not likely to enlighten greatly the deliberations of the Council, because they are not too educated, and because it is not easy to reach agreement on another Canadien, I propose the abbé Louis Laflèche . . . .

Three days later Simpson sent a copy of the above to London with the following comments:

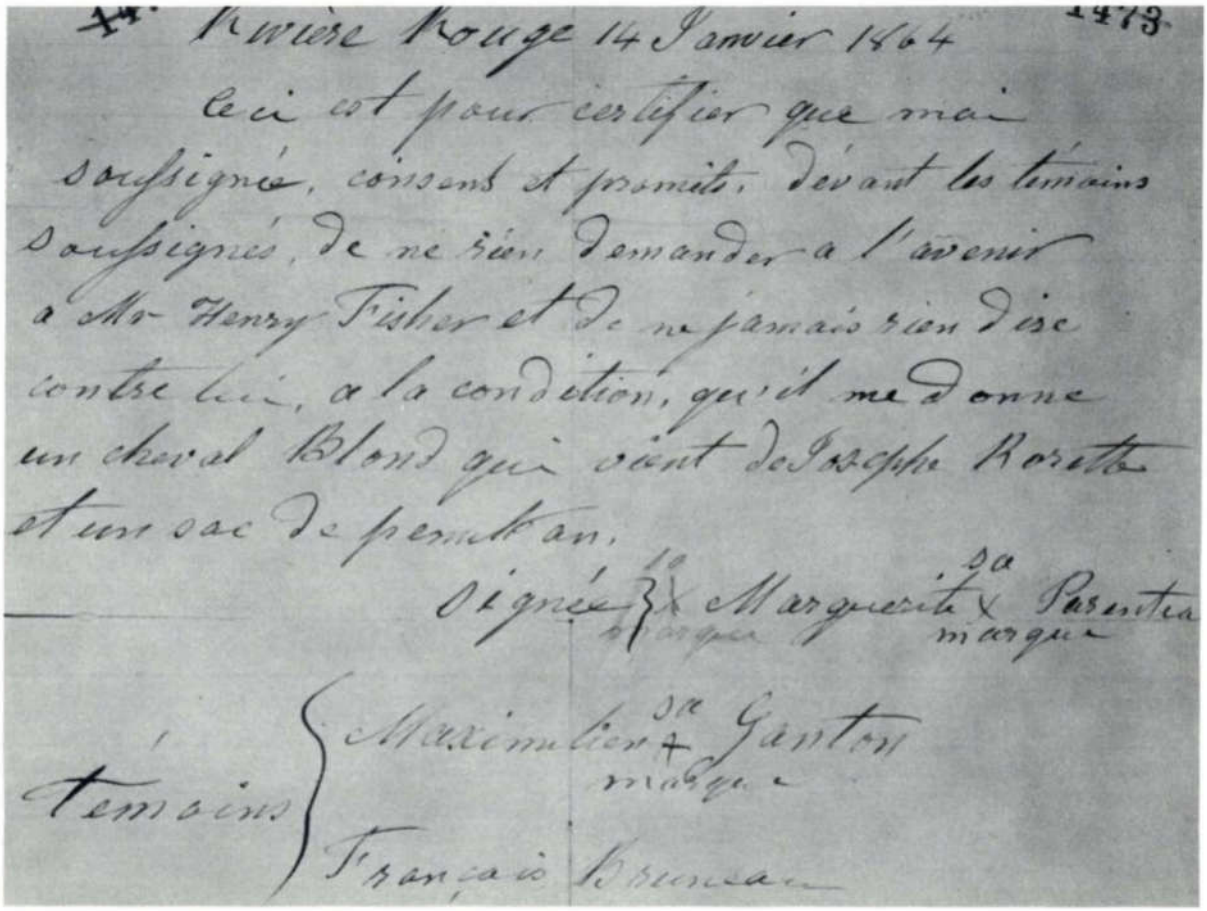
Mr. Laflèche, the priest, I consider a very fit person for the office being intelligent and apparently well disposed: the others are ignorant and illiterate although represented by the Bishop as sufficiently intelligent to report to the French half breeds the proceedings of the Council . . .

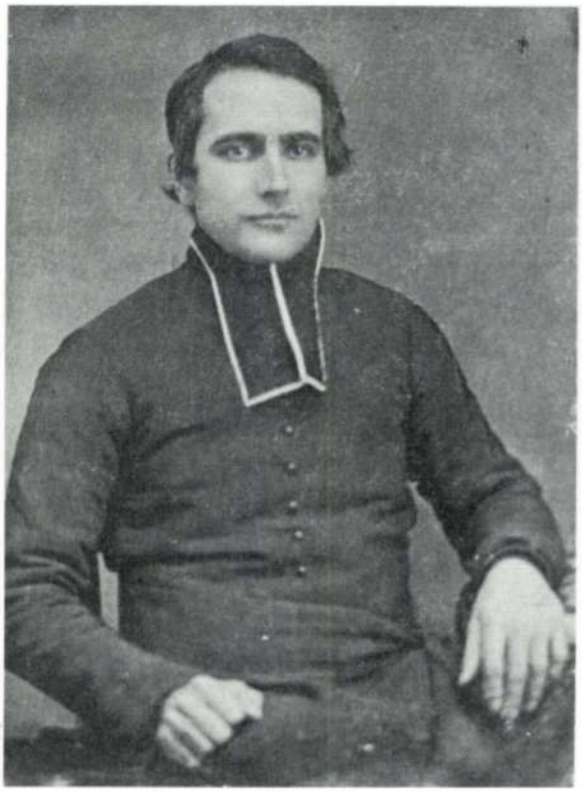
In the case of Genthon, Simpson's comment on illiteracy was correct, but in the case of the others, particularly François Bruneau, his judgement was ill-founded. The Committee in London accepted his verdict and explained in a letter to Simpson, 12 April 1850:

With regard to the addition proposed to be made to the Council by the admission of six halfbreeds, it is not the intention of the Governor and Committee to increase the number of councillors at present to that extent or in that way. They think it expedient however that the Rev. M. Laflèche should have a seat in the council, and they have accordingly directed a commission to be made out for him and forwarded to you by this mail . . .

During the summer of 1850 Simpson, who was then at Red River, seems to have reconsidered his original verdict when he looked more carefully into the matter.

This agreement is signed by Marguerite Parenteau (third 'wife' of Councillor Henry Fisher) who promises to leave him alone in return for a horse and a bag of pemmican. Witnesses are Councillor Maximilien Genthon (who signed with an X) and François Bruneau.


1473.
Rivière Rouge 14 Janvier 1864
Ceci est pour certifier que moi
soussignée, consens et promets, devant les témoins
soussignés, de ne rien demander a l'avenir
a Mr Henry Fisher et de ne jamais rien dire
contre lui, a la condition, qu'il me donne
un cheval Blond qui vient de Joseph Korte
et un sac de pemmican.
Signée } X Marguerite X Parenteau
sa marque
Maximilien X Genton
sa marque
Témoins
Français Bruneau



Councillor Louis-François Laflèche at the time of his ordination in 1844 when he was 25 years old.

On 5 July 1850 he wrote to the Governor and Committee:

> From Mr. Lafleche's popularity, moderation & good disposition, I think he would prove a valuable acquisition to the Council . . . The Bishop said he thought this appointment would be very acceptable to the Roman Catholic population, but urged strongly the appointment of 2 or 3 of the more respectable of the Canadian Halfbreeds as Councillors, specially mentioning François Bruneau & Narcisse Marion, as being possessed of the confidence of that part of the population. The former is a man of some standing in the settlement & of fair education, having been brought up by the Bishop for the priesthood, although he did not eventually follow that vocation; his appointment, I think would be a measure of good policy, as being likely to please the Roman Catholic settlers, while from his attainments & standing he may be considered tolerably well qualified to assist in Council. Of the latter (Marion) I have not so good an opinion & cannot, therefore, recommend his appointment. I think it right to state my belief that, the Bishop, in urging the appointment of these parties, was soley actuated by a desire to remove the murmurs of his Congregation & to promote the peace of the settlement, as the Canadian Halfbreeds, who form a very large proportion of the inhabitants, from not being represented on Council by any of their own party, feel that they are not put on a footing of equality with the other classes in the community.

But it would take another crisis before the Governor and Committee in London would act upon Simpson's recommendations. In the meantime the Council continued to use, in lesser positions, as if to have the Métis and Canadiens serve a novitiate, those who had been called to its membership but had not been elected. Others of this literate and illiterate, but invariably able, segment of the population were called upon to fill civic posts.

On 5 September 1850, the Abbé Louis-François Laflèche, later to become the bishop of Trois-Rivières, had been sworn in as a Councillor of Assiniboia. He was to attend eleven meetings of the Council out of a possible fifteen before returning east permanently in 1856. But to give the number of meetings he attended is to say very little of the active role he played at each of them. It may be coincidental, but in reading the minutes one is struck by the growing involvement of the Council in the affairs of the colony during the period of Laflèche's attendance. It could be that a more comprehensive or even more expressive way of recording the proceedings was being used. In any case, it is with the appointment of Laflèche that the participation of French-speaking inhabitants in the affairs of the Council becomes noticeable. The Council, whose composition had not otherwise changed, called upon more Métis and Canadiens to administer the judicial affairs of the colony. At the meeting of 16 October 1850 François Bruneau, Maximilien Genthon and Pascal Breland, as well as Urbain Delorme (who was, like Genthon, unable to sign his name) and Joseph Guilbeault were appointed magistrates in the various districts of Red River.

During the 1850s, an effort was made to remove, or have removed, Major W.B. Caldwell from the governorship of Assiniboia. The French-speaking councillors, as well as the Métis and Canadien population, refused to participate, not necessarily out of allegiance to the Hudson's Bay Company or out of love for Caldwell, but because the plan seemed unlikely to ensure an important objective: the continued separation in practice of the duties of the Governor of Rupert's Land and those of the Governor of Assiniboia. In other words, it was felt that the separation between commerce and government which the cautious administration of Caldwell appeared to have recognized, should not be abandoned.

The movement came to nought. At a meeting on 1 May 1851, Caldwell was confirmed to his post. More important, Eden Colvile informed the Council of Assiniboia that the Honourable Committee in London had issued instructions that 'he [the Governor of Rupert's Land in the absence of George Simpson] was no longer to preside, either in Court or in Council'. The separation of Rupert's Land, a commerical hinterland, and Assiniboia, a settled colony, was official as far as the governing of the one and the other was concerned. Furthermore, Adam Thom's commission 'as Recorder and Councillor had been revoked'.

At the Council's meeting held the previous October, Abbé Laflèche had been appointed to the first of a dozen or so committees on which he was to serve during his years as councillor. Like so many of the others, this one consisted of three members. It had been formed to purchase 'a small press and types complete'. A year later, on 21 November 1851, the committee submitted its

report and recommendations; the sixth and seventh of the latter bear quoting for they could have been inspired by Laflèche:

> 6. As everything must be printed in French as well as English, we require a supply of accents and cedillas . . . .
>
> 7. With reference to the use of two languages, we need as many capitals . . . as may express "Riviere-Rouge" and "District d'Assiniboia."

Whether or not the press and type were purchased is not clear from the minutes of the Council. One thing is certain; invitations to attend meetings were printed between 19 March 1860 and 5 November 1868, in French and English, and using at least two different types.

At the meeting of 1 May 1851 Laflèche seconded a motion that was to be revived in later years in the much more turbulent atmosphere of the Manitoba Schools Question:

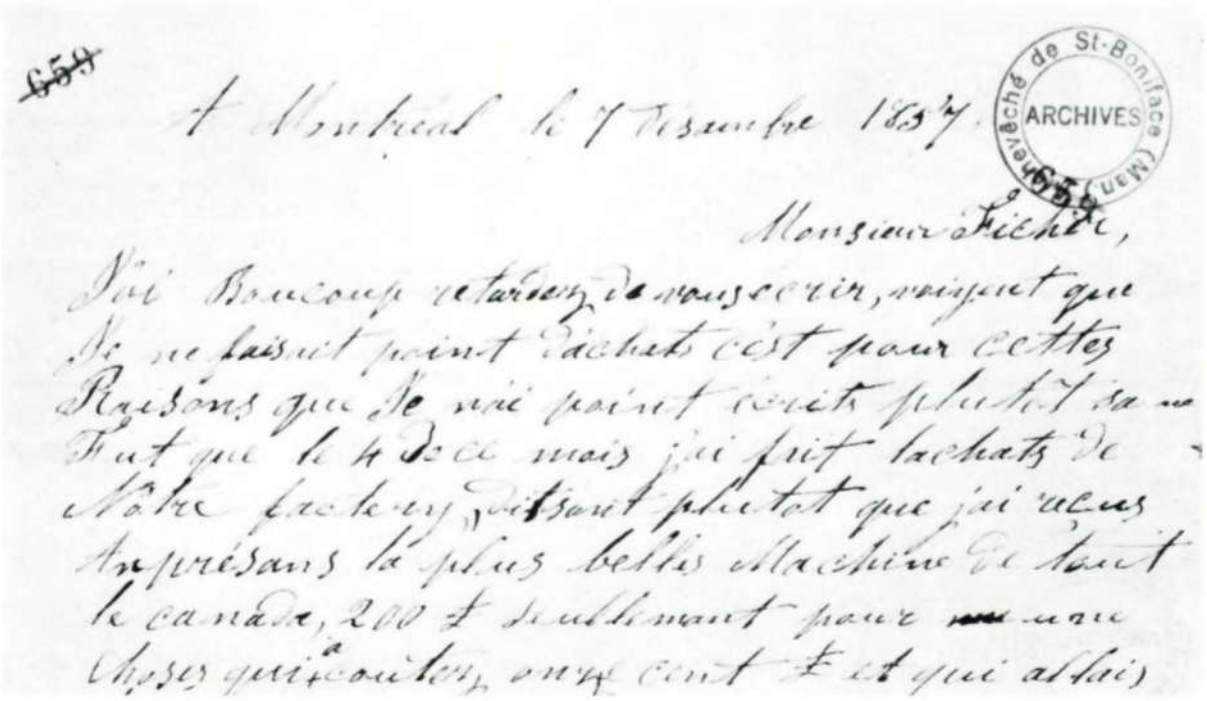
> To weaken the mischievous and destructive energy of those violent and untamed qualities of human nature . . . and to strengthen the feelings of honourable independence, to encourage habits of industry, sobriety, and economy, it is
>
> RESOLVED – That £100 be granted from the public funds, to be divided, equally, between the Bishop of Rupert's Land [David Anderson] and the Bishop of North West, [Norbert Provencher] to be applied by them at their discretion for the purposes of education.

In 1852, Laflèche again seconded a motion concerning education, this time to grant to the Reverend John Black, a minister of the Presbyterian faith who had arrived at Red River the year before, the sum of fifteen pounds sterling to help him with his school. At the same time, Laflèche served notice that at the next meeting of the Council, he would move a motion that an additional grant, in the amount 'now granted for the education of the English population' be awarded to Provencher. The resolution, when moved a few months later, was passed unanimously.

In the meantime, Laflèche had served on two other committees, the more important of which – the Law Amendment Committee – reported on the state of law in the colony during the meeting of November 1851. The committee felt rather proud to announce its success in reducing 'the whole of the existing regulations within the narrow compass of little more than forty resolutions'. The other committee on which Laflèche served was not so lofty in nature. It concerned a ferry to be established across the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. The committee reported that the first ferryman, Narcisse Marion, another former candidate for a seat on the Council, had received five pounds monthly for the two-month duration of his contract.

At the same November meeting a petition in French submitted by Louis Riel senior was tabled. When the Company had introduced a fulling mill to the colony they had housed it on his land. His returns from the operation of the mill had been small and he sought compensation in the form of rent. His petition was rejected unanimously until such time as Riel could provide adequate grounds for his claim. A year later, in a letter tabled in English this time, Riel proposed to buy the building on his property, though not the mill itself. Three councillors, including Laflèche and Provencher, were named to consider the proposal.

Part of a letter from Louis Riel senior to Councillor Henry Fisher. Riel had just received, free, machinery for carding wool which he planned to use in his mill on the Seine River. Its transportation to the Red River Settlement was expected to cost £200, and he hoped that a company made up of Fisher as president, Councillor François Bruneau, Charles Larance, and Pierre Gladu would meet the cost.



Clotilde Bruneau, daughter of Councillor François Bruneau, who married John Grant, son of Chief Trader John Richard Grant.

At the same meeting Grant, Provencher, Laflèche, and two other councillors voted against the granting of twenty-five pounds to the Agricultural Association, and the motion was rejected. Another resolution, this one moved by Laflèche and seconded by Provencher, was more successful. Indeed, it was carried unanimously. It appointed as judges of the petty court of the Upper District two further members of the French-speaking community: William Dease and Louis Bousquet. The former, whose family name was often spelt Desce or Desse in documents of the period as it had acquired a French pronunciation, was to be a councillor in 1868.

Louis Bousquet was a young Métis, who, when orphaned at age four, had been placed under the guardianship of Provencher whose school he attended. He became a noteworthy member of the choir at the St-Boniface Cathedral. He also became a teacher at Provencher's school and had completed about a year and a half of a two-year contract when the Grey Nuns arrived at St-Boniface and took over the school. Bousquet was without a job. His employer, Bishop Provencher, perhaps to avoid being accused of a breach of contract, offered him work either as a labourer or as teacher at the school of St-François-Xavier – on the condition that his wife of one month be its caretaker. Bousquet refused both offers. He felt they were below his station and that of his wife, the former Betsy Fisher, daughter of Chief Trader (later Councillor) Henry Fisher. In any case, it appears certain that Bousquet was a member of the Métis community sufficiently qualified to meet the duties of a petty magistrate. His appointment, recommended as it was by Provencher, could have been a late recognition of the services he had rendered to that community as a teacher. Bousquet was not to enjoy his new status very long; he died at the hands of the Sioux in 1858.

The meeting of December 1852 closed with Laflèche's notice of a motion 'that some measure ought to be adopted for preventing secret sales of land to the injury of creditors.' Already the question of lands was becoming a vexatious one. At the next meeting, the first held in 1853, a motion was carried unanimously that henceforth no immovable property was to be sold unless intention of sale had been posted 'at the door of every church in the Settlement' on the two Sundays prior to the day of the sale. At the same meeting, a petition in French signed by Narcisse Marion was submitted by Governor Caldwell. No action seems to have been taken on its request that public accounts, receipts, and expenses be posted publicly at the end of each fiscal year, but the petition itself illustrates how much more aware the French-speaking portion of the population had become of public affairs.

Perhaps because of the activity of Laflèche in the Council, and no doubt as a result of the increased involvement of the Métis and Canadien population, the repeated suggestion of adding to their representation on the Council would not be silenced. When Eden Colvile was at Red River to confirm Caldwell in his post as Governor of Assiniboia he wrote to Simpson in a letter dated 22 May 1851: '. . . this preponderance of the clerical element [in the Council] causes a good deal of Dissatisfaction. I think of recommending to the Committee the names of François Bruneau, Salomon Hamelin and Pascal Breland.' Again the same names had surfaced, and not quite a year after Simpson had himself spoken warmly of one of them, Bruneau, as 'a man of sound standing & of fair education'. The Governor and Committee in London were sufficiently impressed to take action this time and François Bruneau was named a councillor and was sworn in on 29 March 1853.

Bruneau, the son of Antoine, was a first cousin of Julie, wife of Louis-Joseph Papineau, and a nephew of Pierre Bruneau, member for Chambly, Lower Canada. In 1814 when five years old, he had returned to Montreal with his father, an employee of the North West Company, only to come back to Red River alone some seven years later. The reason for his return is not clear. Had this illegitimate boy, a Métis to boot, proved an embarrassment in the refined circles of the 'parvenue' society in which the Papineaus and Bruneaus moved? At St-Boniface, François attended Provencher's school and completed in 1829 his Rhétorique (or thirteenth year), the first rhétoricien of the Collège de St-Boniface. He was not long in making a place for himself. He taught at Provencher's school and in 1831 married Marguerite Harrison (daughter of that Edward H. Harrison, a North West Company employee, of whom McDonald of Garth had written, somewhat disdainfully: 'A very good fellow, but no trader, he never could learn to speak French'). Bruneau appears to have given up teaching to

become a farmer and cattle breeder shortly after his marriage. By 1849 he was a man of means. In the census of that year he is listed as the owner of a house, stable and barn, two horses, three mares, two oxen, one bull, five cows, seven calves, three pigs, nine sheep, one plough, six carts, and two canoes; he had ten acres of land under cultivation. Public affairs were also to attract his attention. He was a member of the vigilance committee set up at the time of the Sayer affair in 1849, and the only member of it to sit on the jury of the trial that followed. He did not however sign the petition asking the Council to remove Thom and to name Canadiens and Métis to the Council. Bruneau preferred caution and he stood aloof. He was therefore not implicated in events that challenged the Company's authority too directly. The events of 1849 and his part in it summarize quite well his career. As a councillor he would protect the interests of his Métis compatriots, but without affecting those of the Company, and without contributing overly to their social, economic, and political advancement. In many ways Bruneau can be regarded as a civil servant. He attended forty-one of a possible fifty meetings of the Council between his appointment and his death in June 1865. His nomination to the Council, where he joined Cuthbert Grant, balanced the clerical element of the French-speaking representation.

The representation was soon to change. On 7 June 1853 Provencher died and Grant the year following on 15 July. For the intervening year the lay element held the balance, but the activity of Abbé Laflèche in the affairs of the Council was in no way affected. At the meeting of 29 March 1853 he was asked to communicate to Louis Riel senior the recommendations of the Council regarding the fulling mill and he was given authority 'to dispose of the exclusive rights of ferrying for hire'. In contrast with this, Bruneau, at his first meeting, merely seconded the nominations for the yearly auditors. At the following meeting, in October 1853, Laflèche not only reported on his talk with Riel senior, but also seconded a motion that no money be granted for public improvements without previous study of the improvement proposed and a recommendation by the Board of Public Works, to which Bruneau had just been nominated. He further moved that Bruneau, Maximilien Genthon, Jean-Baptiste Lépine, Salomon Hamelin, Michel Dumas, Narcisse Marion and Joseph Charette dit Jean Vanisse be authorized to trace a road from the Forks to the Pointe Coupée, present-day St-Adolphe. Finally, and to show how far-ranging were his interests, Laflèche proposed, seconded by Bruneau, that three shillings and sixpence be paid for the head of every wolf killed within twenty miles of the settlement. Joseph Guilbeault, Maximilien Genthon, and Bruneau himself were among those named to implement this resolution.

Laflèche did not attend the meeting called for the 8th of December, Immaculate Conception day and a holy day of obligation. Grant and Bruneau were present but were mentioned only with regard to a vote in which both favoured an amendment to forward a petition to the Governor and Committee in London. Laflèche was also absent from the meetings of 22 June 1854, 3 August 1854, and 28 February 1855. The short minutes of these three meetings mentioned Bruneau only once, when he was named Grant's successor as President of the Petty Court of the District of White Horse Plain. He would however, have participated in the preparation of the reports and recommendations submitted by the Board of Public Works at each meeting.

When the Abbé Laflèche attended the meeting of 19 July 1855, it was after an absence of a year and a half. He had just returned to the settlement from Lower Canada and it could hardly have been a pleasant welcome to have the Council ask him to perform the delicate mission of informing 'Mr Urbain Delorme to resign his office as Petty Judge' of the White Horse Plain District. It seems that Delorme was often absent from the settlement when the Court sat and that he hindered its operation for want of a quorum. At the same meeting, Bruneau was appointed collector of import duties from persons residing at St-Boniface and at St-François-Xavier.

At the next meeting on 27 February 1856, Laflèche was chosen, along with Pascal Breland, François Bruneau, and Louis Bousquet, to take the census of the French-speaking districts of the colony. He moved that the postage on newspapers from and to the Red River Settlement be reduced by half, from one to a halfpenny per paper. The resolution passed unanimously. He then reported on the dissatisfaction of the 'Canadian population' with the surveyor whom they could not understand. Laflèche proposed that 'at the next meeting of Council, a measure might be adopted to have two surveyors, one for the Canadians and the other for the Europeans.'

The proposal was passed at the meeting of 27 May 1856. At this meeting Laflèche either moved or seconded several appointments, including that of Roger Goulet as surveyor – he too was later to become a councillor. The appointment of William Dease and Pascal Breland to the Board of Public Works was seconded by Bruneau.

This meeting was the last that Laflèche attended prior to his permanent return to Lower Canada some two weeks later. With his departure the clerical phase of the Métis and Canadien representation on the Council of Assiniboia came to an end. During the next twenty-three years, only one other cleric, to eight laymen, would be sworn in as councillors of Assiniboia. Nearly all the laymen had, during the previous fifteen years, served in some capacity or other. *The Nor'Wester* in September 1861 wrote of the French-speaking people as follows:

> We regard as leading men the Bruneaus, the Amlins, the Marions, the Genthons, the Ducharmes, the Fishers, the Deases, the Brelands, the Delormes, and many others too numerous to mention, these are their principal men and they are a credit to the Settlement. ◆

'The Critics'

Coppermine

Sketches by Susan Ross

In June 1972 Artist Susan Ross of Thunder Bay, who has become known for her portraits of Indian and Eskimo people, visited Holman Island and the hunting camps near Coppermine. Here is a sampling of her work with titles from her sketchbook.

'An early June goose camp, Richardson River'

'Afternoon tea at a Spring camp close to Coppermine'

'An occasional moose is shot in the valley of the Coppermine River. These Eskimo women told me they were taught how to scrape and tan the hides by an Indian woman.'

'Skinning seals on a cold day at Holman Island'

'Having a snack of spring goose. Camp close to Coppermine'

CHARLTON ISLAND

BY WALTER KENYON

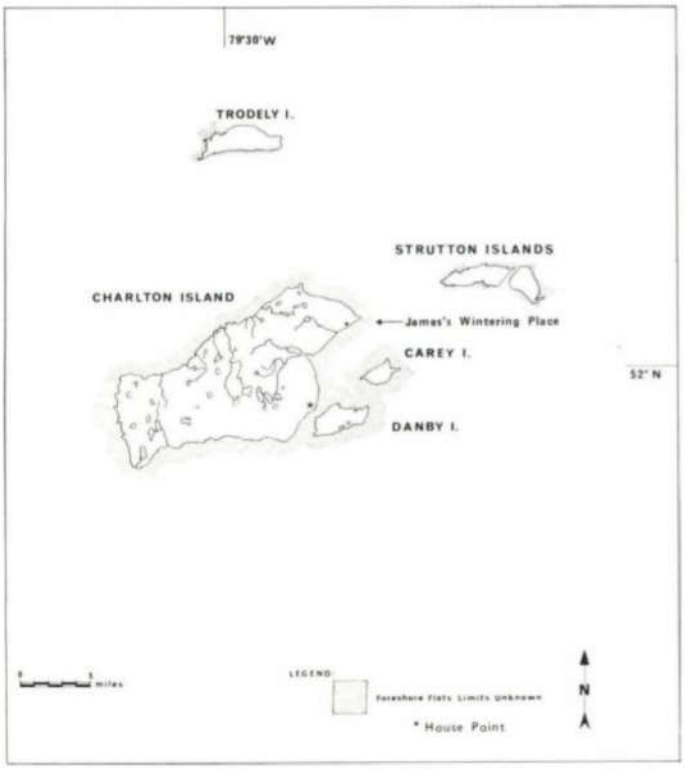
Associate Curator of Ontario Archaeology, Royal Ontario Museum, Dr Kenyon gratefully acknowledges the support of S.M. Hodgson, N W T Commissioner and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources in his work on the Charlton Island site. Quotations from the H B C Archives are made with permission of the Company.

Photographs are by James Chambers

IN THE LATE AFTERNOON of 2 October 1631, a violent storm hit James Bay. Off the east end of Charlton Island the 70-ton *Henrietta Maria* rode at anchor in a shallow bay, lashed by a heavy gale, and blinded by snow and hail. The storm raged all that night and well into the next day; finally it blew itself out, and Captain Thomas James, the explorer from Bristol, went ashore. He was desperately anxious to locate some protected creek or bay where he might safely winter his ship, for it was late in the season. He hoped, too, that he might find some herb or berry that would sustain his exhausted crew. But all he could find were some deer tracks and a few fowl.

After James and his crew had spent a harrowing winter on Charlton Island, he left us the following description:

> This Island and all the rest, (as likewise the Main) is a light white Sand, covered over with a white Moss, and full of Shrubs and low Bushes; excepting some bare Hills, and other Patches. In these bare Places, the Sand will drive with the Wind like Dust. It is very full of Trees, as Spruce and Juniper; but the biggest Tree I saw, was but a foot and a half over. At our first coming hither, we saw some Deer, and kill'd one; but never any since. Foxes, all the Winter we saw many, and kill'd some Dozen of them; but they went all away in May. Bears, we saw but few, but kill'd none; we saw some other little Beasts. In May, there came some Fowl, as Ducks and Geese; of which we kill'd very few. White Partridges we saw; but in small quantities; nor had we any Shot, to shoot at them. Fish we could never see any in the Sea; nor no Bones of Fish on the Shore-side, excepting a few Cockle-shels, and yet nothing in them neither.



After James and his men left Charlton on 2 July 1632, the island was not visited again for 39 years, except, perhaps, by the occasional Indian who left no sign of his passing. Then on 5 July 1671, a couple of ship's boats appeared off the coast bearing Charles Bayly, the bay-side governor of the newly formed Hudson's Bay Company, and Thomas Gorst, his secretary. They had spent the winter at Charles Fort near the mouth of the Rupert River, and were about to begin the long voyage back to England with their rich cargo of furs. The Company ships, *Prince Rupert* and *Wivenhoe*, were anchored off Point Comfort when, as Gorst says:

> The Governor with severall others whereof I was one went in ye Shallops to make further discoveries. Upon an island wee found an old wigwam not built by Indians, but suppose it rather to bee ye place where poor Hudson ended his dayes. From thence wee sailed among severall Islands & land upon Charleton ye place where Capt James of Bristoll wintered. wee found severall barrell boards, Trees sawne, and ye bones of some persons supposed to be ye same he buryed there.

During the next few years, Charlton Island was almost certainly visited on occasion by the men who were establishing the fur trade at the 'bottom of ye bay'; few of these visits were recorded however, because the comings and goings of the men were not always considered worthy of note. On the other hand, we do know that Governor Bayly left Moose River with the *Imploy* on 16 July 1674, to visit Albany River 'where no Englishman had been before'. From Albany, Bayly explored northward as far as Cape Henrietta Maria. And on the return trip he was 'forc'd a-shore upon Charlton Island, where they lay 2 or 3 Days in Distress, and at last got off, with the loss of several Necessaries'.

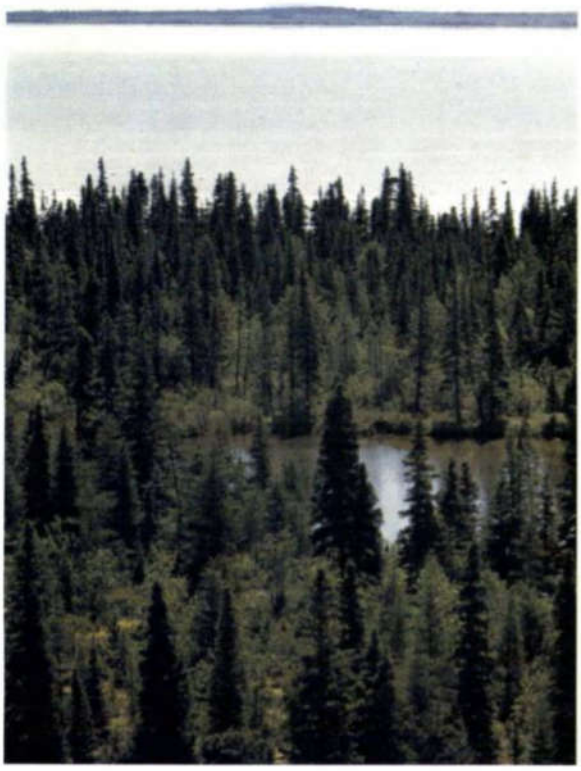
Before he returned to England, Governor Bayly had established posts near the mouths of both the Moose and the Albany Rivers. And he had learned during the process that it was even more difficult and hazardous to take a sea-going vessel into the new posts than into the

old post on Rupert River. The water was simply too shoal and the channels too tortuous. In addition, it was both slow and dangerous to keep a vessel at anchor in the estuary while her cargo was lightered ashore. Discussing the problem, the men in the bay agreed that the safest and most efficient method of furnishing the posts with their annual outfit of supplies and trade goods would be to unload the ship from England at Charlton Island. The furs from the different posts could be assembled there during the early summer in the shallow-draught sloops that were used for travelling in the bay. When the supply ship arrived, she could discharge her cargo, take on the furs, and be off for England in record time. The outfits could then be distributed to the three posts by the sloops that had assembled the furs.

Bayly must have discussed the whole problem with the Committee in England as well – though the correspondence has apparently not survived – because the decision to build a depot on Charlton was already made before he left the bay in 1679. The instructions that the Committee in London sent to Governor Nixon, Bayly's successor, on 29 May 1680, are quite specific on this point:

> Wee do judge by the situation of Charlton Island, that no place is so convenient as that for the Rendezvous from our severall Factories to attend the arrivall of our Ships from hence, And wee hope before this comes to you a good large dry substantiall Warehouse will be there erected to receive the Cargo wee send you, as it was agreed to be, before Mr. Baily left you . . .

Winter's Forest where Captain Thomas James built his house in the winter of 1631-32.



Dr Kenyon with his daughter, Diane, on the bluff overlooking Winter's Forest.

When Governor Nixon arrived in the bay in 1679, Nehemiah Walker, captain of the *John and Alexander*, took him to Point Comfort. The following year, however, the outfit for the bottom of the bay was for the first time sent directly to Charlton Island. This 1680 outfit consisted of three ships that sailed from Gravesend on 2 June. They were to stay together till they reached the west end of Hudson Strait where they would separate: the *Albemarle* was to go to the mouth of the Severn River when Captain Draper would establish a post, while the *Colliton* and the *Prudent Mary* sailed directly to Charlton.

The Company continued to use Charlton Island as a rendezvous, and clearly intended to increase the size of the establishment there. The instructions which the Committee drew up for Henry Sergeant on 27 April 1683, for example, begin as follows:

> Whereas we have chosen and Authorized you to be Governour and chiefe Commander of the Hudsons Bay Compa. within the Bay, you are to goe on board the good shipp *Dilligence* wch. is now bounde for Charleton Island in Hudsons Bay under the Commande of Capt. Nehemiah Walker.

He was instructed, further, to take the furs to Charlton every spring, as soon as the trade was finished at the different posts, and to wait there for the arrival of the ships from England. The Committee was concerned, too, with the safety of the new establishment, for he is told that he

> must alwaies keepe some hands upon Charleton Island, where the yearly rendevous of our shipps from hence & from all the Factories under you is to be wherefore we think fitt you erect a Forte there & that convenient Warehouses there be alwaies kept in good repaire & you are to contrive that those who shall winter there doe spend their time as much for our proffitt as may be, either in cultivateing the land, in fishing & makeing oyle, or in makeing pott ashes or else you may judge for the service of the Company, we intending as soone as may be to plant a Colloney there.

The reasons for establishing a depot on Charlton Island are quite clear; and the instructions that were

Nixon's settlement, the site of the forge in the foreground and in the distance the remains of the 'good large dry substantiall Warehouse'.

issued by the Committee in London are equally clear. But were the instructions actually carried out? Certainly the Honourable Company never got around to establishing a colony on Charlton, but what did actually happen? The earliest information that we have on the subject is contained in the report that Governor Nixon sent to the Committee in London in 1682. This report tells us that after the *Albemarle* and the *Prince Rupert* had sailed for England on 9 August 1681, Nixon remained on Charlton to build 'a house . . . 20 foot squaire, and two stories and a half high'. We also learn that the structure had a dirt floor, as there were no planks available for flooring, and a tile roof laid without mortar.

On 16 September, the *Diligence* arrived from England, under the command of Captain Nehemiah Walker. Although the vessel lost its rudder on an outlying reef, it was finally brought safely into the anchorage under jury rig. But there was no blacksmith on Charlton Island at the time, and it was therefore impossible to forge new rudder-irons for the *Diligence*. It was also getting late in the season, much too late to even think of getting safely out through Hudson Strait that year. So Nixon had to provide for the wintering of the vessel and its crew.

The nixt thing that I tooke care for was their safety in winter, to provyd them a house, and to see out a safe place for the ship to ly in . . . I put my carpinter to worke about theire house and I sent for clay to chechecheawan, that the bricklayer might build a stove and I incourraged his men with my bottle, so that Captain Walker had a good and roomly warme hous, without any trouble to himselfe in the least . . .

By the time the vessel was unloaded, and the outfits dispatched by sloop to the posts at Moose, Albany, and Rupert, it was so late in the season that Nixon was unable to get back to his headquarters at Moose Factory. He had no choice, therefore, but to spend the winter on Charlton Island himself.

Although the Company continued to use the depot on Charlton Island, they realized that it was extremely vulnerable to attack by sea unless it was fortified and garrisoned by a strong body of men. And this, of course, would be a very heavy drain on the Company resources. They had just about decided to abandon the depot on Charlton when the whole matter was taken out of their hands by Pierre de Troyes; he arrived overland from New France with a hundred men in the summer of 1686, and captured all three of the Company posts on James Bay. When he returned to Quebec in the fall, he left Iberville and Sainte Hélène in command of the newly captured forts, and gave Iberville specific instructions to burn down the establishment on Charlton Island lest the English should fortify it later. The depot on Charlton, at that time, would apparently have consisted of the house that Nixon was building in the fall of 1681

when the *Diligence* arrived from England, the 'roomly warme hous' that he built that same fall for Nehemiah Walker and his crew, and a small 'seller' that he built as a storeroom beside Walker's house.

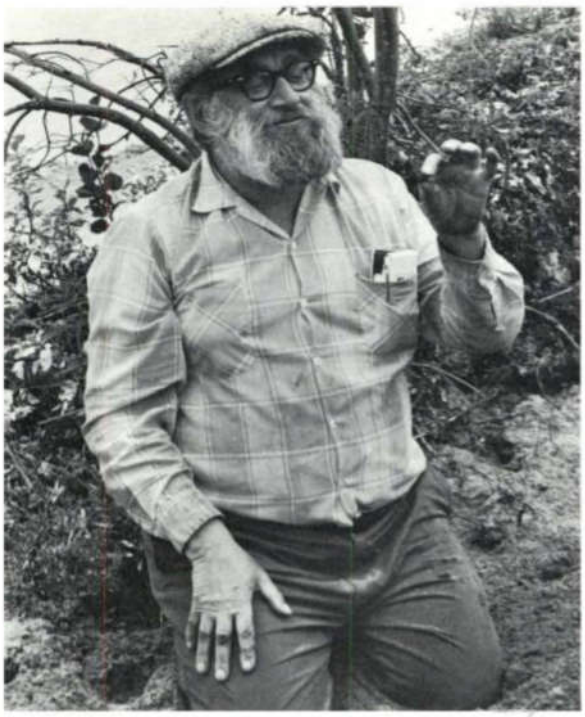
I first stumbled across a few relics dating from the late 1600s when I was camped at the site of some abandoned Hudson's Bay Company buildings on Charlton Island in the summer of 1972. This abandoned post was built around the turn of the century, and continued in use until 1931 when the railroad reached Moosonee at the bottom of James Bay. Last summer, when I returned to Charlton with a small crew to see if we could locate and excavate Nixon's 1681 depot, we located the structure without too much difficulty. It was nestled against the southern slope of an old raised beach some 200 yards north of the point where the abandoned buildings now stand. As we cleared away the brush and started to remove the sod from the area, however, it became obvious that the structure we had located would measure some 20 x 30 feet, and thus be 10 feet longer than the 20 x 20 foot structure that Nixon had built in the fall of 1681. All that we actually saw at this stage were faint ridges outlining a rectangle that had a broad, low rubble pile composed of broken bricks and roof tiles occupying most of its western half. Continuing the excavation, we learned that the low ridges were the log footings for the four walls of the building, while the rubble pile marked the location of a large brick and tile stove. For beneath the rubble, the base of both the stove and the chimney were still intact.

While we were clearing up the floor of the building – a dirt floor, by the way – we encountered a problem that is still not resolved to my entire satisfaction. We found large numbers of broken roof tiles that had quite clearly been burned; and both the distribution and number of the tile fragments suggested that they had fallen from the roof of a building that was destroyed by fire. This, combined with the fact that there were no traces of mortar on any of the tiles, would suggest that we were indeed excavating Nixon's depot in spite of the discrepant measurements. But where were the burned walls? The place should have been littered with burned and decayed wood. We found a fair amount of ash and charcoal scattered about, but nothing like the quantity that would have resulted if either a log or a frame building had been burned down. As I could find no satisfactory solution to this problem, I simply tucked it away for future reference and went on with the excavation.

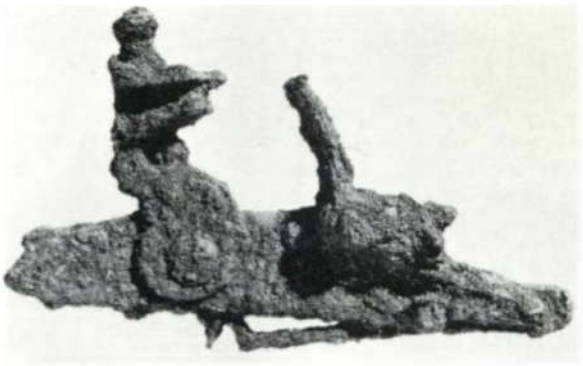
As we moved eastward across the floor of the building, we found that there was a joist or spacer every five feet to make the side walls more rigid. When we reached the fourth of these spacers, the one that was located 20 feet from the west end of the building, we noted a marked difference in the nature and distribution of the debris that littered the floor. All of the food refuse – bits of bone and charred peas – was west of that particular joist, as were most of the pipe fragments,

The base of the stove in Nixon's depot is uncovered by Carolyn Parmenter.

In the foreground, left, the foundation of Nixon's depot is visible. Once occupied by the HBC District Manager, the house on the left was headquarters for the expedition and on the right, and below, is the old H B C staff house.



Walter Kenyon examines a fragment of a kaolin pipe.



Gun lock as it appeared on recovery.

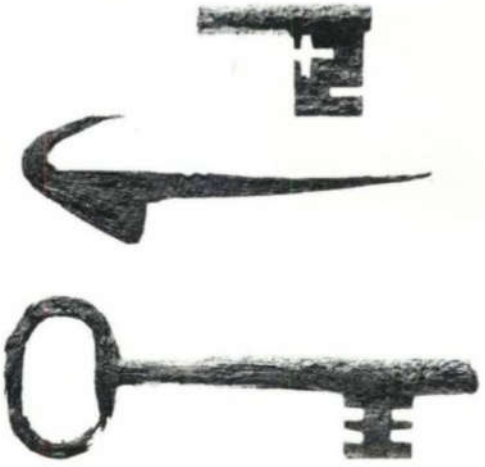
beads, musket-balls, and other evidence of occupation. The fourth joist, then, marked the location of a partition that was probably the original east wall of Nixon's 20 x 20 foot depot. The next ten feet of the structure was almost certainly a later addition. Beyond this wall was a floor of poles that had simply been laid on the ground, parallel to the east end of the depot. They ranged from three to eight inches in diameter, and had been completely reduced to charcoal by the intense fire that destroyed the building. Iberville, it appears, had followed his instructions to the letter, and had burned down the establishment on Charlton Island 'lest the English should fortify it later'.

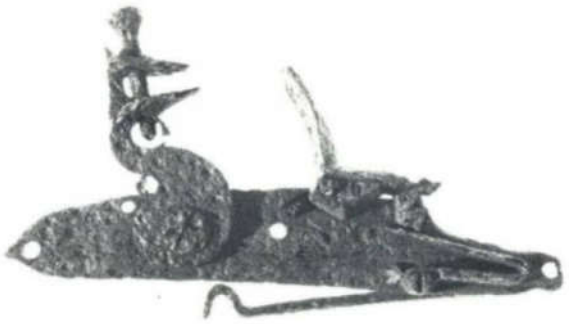
Fifteen feet north of Nixon's depot was a large depression, some 28 feet square, in the southern slope of an old raised beach. Because it appeared to be man-made rather than a natural formation, I had the area brushed out so that we could see it more clearly, and then excavated a large rectangle in the centre of the depression. As soon as we started digging, it was obvious that we were into another structure. Rusty, hand-wrought nails, kaolin pipes, musket-balls, and similar debris were much more plentiful here than they had been in the depot; we decided, therefore that this must be the 'roomly warme hous' that Nixon had built for Nehemiah Walker and the crew of the *Diligence*.

Continued excavation, however, demonstrated quite clearly that this northern structure was in fact a blacksmith shop. It was a simple structure, measuring 17 x 18 feet, with a dirt floor that was thickly strewn with ashes and cinders from the forge that stood roughly in the centre of the building. The forge itself was an open wooden box, four feet square, with a masonry wall of English roof tiles along the inside of its northern edge. Although the upper portions of the wall had fallen over, we were still able to arrive at a reasonably accurate estimate of its height, which was probably about three feet. Marking the southern corners of the forge were two posts, some seven or eight inches in diameter, that had rotted down to the ground, and were then visible only as dark, fibrous stains in the clear, yellow sand of the floor. When it was built, the box was first filled to a depth of

The blacksmith's cold-chisel, saw fragment and adze blade.

Door latch and key, approximately 4" long.





The gun lock, after conservation.

perhaps two and a half feet with sand, and then capped with a layer of clay that was probably no more than a few inches thick. The smith would then have built his fire on the smooth, hard surface of the clay.

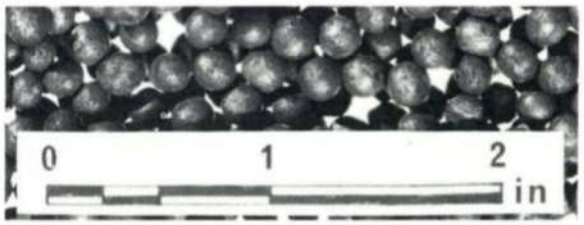
In his 1682 report, Nixon does not mention having a blacksmith shop in his tiny settlement on Charlton Island. But he does tell us that he nipped over to the mainland in the little *Colliton* as soon as the ice was out of the bay – on 19 June – to get a smith to build a new rudder for Nehemiah Walker's ship, the *Diligence*. Returning to Charlton on 30 June, he brought with him Thomas Kildale, the 'Armourar & Smyth' from Moose Factory. The blacksmith shop we excavated last summer, then, would be the structure that was hastily thrown up so that Kildale would have a place to work.

The first tool that we found on the floor of the shop was a cold-chisel. Then behind the forge, near the back of the building, the lock from an old musket was found. Near the southeast corner of the forge, a large $^{7}/_{8}$" auger, 2' 4¼" long was unearthed. This would be just the thing for drilling holes through heavy planks edge-wise, so that they could be rivetted together with long iron bars to form the blade of the rudder. We even found a number of heavy washers that would just slip over the ends of such rods for rivetting. Found in every stage of manufacture, the washers had been fashioned from $^{3}/_{8}$" iron rod. Just south of the auger, we located a massive cold-chisel, a shade over 14" in length, and weighing an even 14 pounds.

Although we found them everywhere, clinkers, ashes, bits of charcoal, and lumps of coal were concentrated heavily along the north and east sides of the forge. Perhaps the smith stood on the west or south side of the forge while he was working, and just pushed the debris off the other side. Stray bits and pieces of badly rusted iron were everywhere, and although we had no means of weighing the material, we probably discarded over 100 pounds of it. Then we encountered a solid cluster of specimens, snug against the west wall of the building, and about four feet north of the southwest corner. First, we found a small pavement of musket-balls; then at the edge of the cluster, and overlapping it at two or three spots, was a similar pavement of bird-shot. From their distribution, it was quite clear that both the shot and balls had been bagged when they were abandoned there, although the bags had long since disintegrated.

At the north end of the cluster of shot, was a mass of rusted iron that finally resolved itself into a wooden tool-chest. The chest itself was long since gone, apart from a few spectral traces of the bottom which were still present. But beyond any doubt, it was a wooden tool-chest. We found the hasp with which it was closed, one of the handles, and a handful of brass tacks that probably adorned the lid. Many of the iron specimens that had been in the chest were rusted beyond salvation, while others, for no apparent reason, were in almost mint condition. Among the latter were two cold-chisels, several short pieces of bar-iron, a few spikes, a small pintle, a spare cock for a flint-lock musket, the shoe for a wooden spade with a blade that was 8¼" wide, and an adze blade. In addition to the iron specimens, the tool-box also contained the blacksmith's spare tobacco pipe and gun-flint, a number of oddly shaped pieces of brass that appeared to be the remnants of an old kettle, and a spoon or ladle that had been cut from the same material.

Musket balls.



The forge of the blacksmith shop is uncovered by Carolyn Parmenter. A brass lug from a big kettle is visible on a roof tile at the right.

In the winter months the old H B C house on Charlton Island takes on new life as Mrs Elsie Jolly, her sons and their families move in.

After we had returned to Toronto, I found a specific reference to the tools that we found in the old blacksmith shop on Charlton Island. At a meeting of the Committee that was held in London on 9 November 1683, the following entry was recorded in the minutes:

Ordered the Tooles Tho. Killdale Gunsmith left in the Bay be paid for and the Secretary take Advice wth. some of the Compa. Gunsmiths what they are worth. . .

While we were excavating the blacksmith shop, our guide, James Jolly of Rupert House, casually mentioned one day that a high tide, such as occurred there from time to time, would wash away the tents that were pitched on the beach. That evening, a sheepish-looking crew quietly moved them inland, placing them on top of the same raised beach into which the blacksmith shop had been scooped, but about 300 feet farther west. When I wandered over to take a look at them, I noticed two more man-made depressions in the southern slope of the old beachline. A very brief examination showed that they were the missing structures – the 'roomly warme hous' that Nixon had built for Nehemiah Walker and the small 'seller' that was built to hold his provisions.

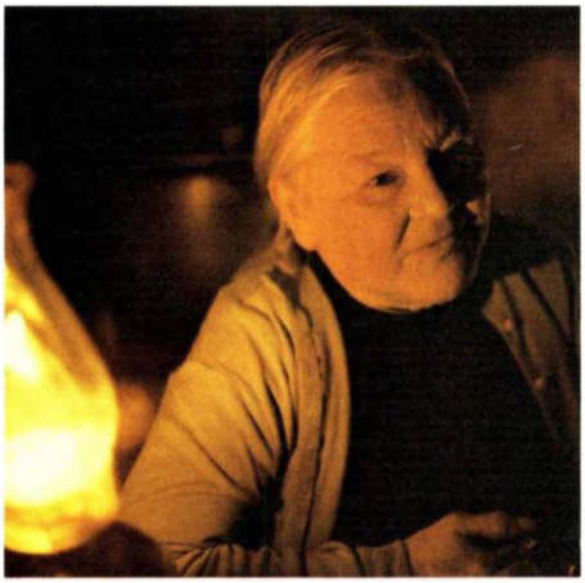
Following this discovery, I visited them almost every day; and each time I was tempted to dig a small exploratory trench through that house. Nixon had spent most the winter there, jammed into a building that could not have measured more than 20x30 feet, with Nehemiah Walker and 34 men. I suspect it was the memory of that hopelessly overcrowded house that prompted Nixon to suggest that the Committee in London should really supply him with a more liberal and varied assortment of beverages, and to point out to them that James Bay was 'a bad country to drink water in'. But I did not have time to begin another excavation; it was already late in the summer, the geese were becoming restless, and I still had the blacksmith shop to finish. So each day I turned aside like some venerable anchorite who knows that he must avoid the sin of temptation, but does so reluctantly.

As we completed the excavation of the blacksmith shop, I was again struck by the fact that I could find no trace of the walls – the same problem that I had faced when I was excavating Nixon's depot. Like the depot, the shop had been roofed with English tiles, and again, they had been laid without mortar. Clearly, the blacksmith shop had not been burned down, but neither had it been left there to rot away, as there were almost no traces of fallen timbers or planks, and the few that were present were in remarkably good shape. At one stage in these deliberations, I thought that the walls might have been removed in an attempt to salvage the lumber. But who would want to salvage them? Not de Troyes or Iberville, as they had deliberately burned down Nixon's depot. And there was no one else around who could have used the lumber. In any event, why salvage the lumber and abandon a box of good tools?

I think that the answer is to be found in a brief passage tucked away in an obscure corner of Governor Nixon's 1682 report. Complaining about the lack of tradesmen in the bay, he says:

the charge that yow are at yearly for mous skins and for sowing of them, together, to make tents to cover our houses, would pay the sawiers wages double. . .

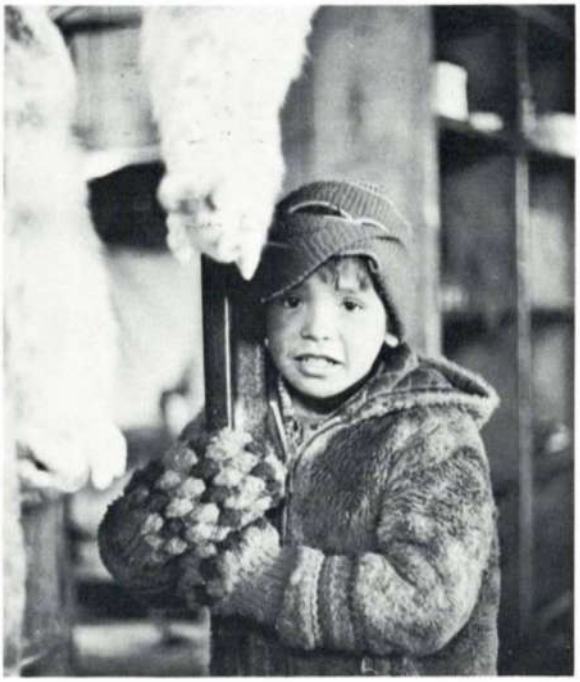
Today, there are innumerable framed tents scattered across the bush country of northern Canada. They are built by erecting a simple frame structure with a pitched roof, but without projecting eaves, and then dropping a tent over the framework instead of covering it with siding and sheeting. Apparently these are lineal descendants of the ones that Governor Nixon erected on Charlton Island almost 300 years ago. ◆



Mrs Elsie Jolly.

In 1934 the Company leased Charlton Island from the N W T as a beaver reserve and imported seven pairs of beaver. Their numbers increased and controlled trapping was started in 1940. Martens – and 100 lemmings to feed them – were added, as well as a number of mink that swam back to the mainland twenty miles away.

For some years the Jolly family have wintered on the island where they make an annual count of beaver lodges and harvest beaver and other fur-bearers in season. The men are expert trappers and the women are equally skilled in preparing the pelts for sale. In 1962, the reserve was turned over to the federal government.



James Jolly.

February 1974. Dr Kenyon on a flying visit to Charlton Island, and several members of the Jolly family.

FOREST FIRE

Charred remains of a mature coniferous forest.

Photographs and Text By

LEN AND JOYCE HOLMES

A husband and wife team from Winnipeg, the Holmeses have for some years been recording scenes of nature for their personal enjoyment.

Fireweed.

IN 1968 lightning struck and destroyed approximately 6,000 acres of a mature coniferous forest in Kootenay National Park, British Columbia, near the boundary of Banff National Park. We visited the burn area just weeks after the fire. There were no signs of life. It was a scene of destruction and desolation.

Many times since the fire, we have revisited the burn area and have observed the wonder of the restoration process on the charred remains. In the natural world, fire is neither good nor bad. It merely creates a new environment which is a part of nature's cycle of life and death.

A new plant cycle begins.

Wild rose.

Heart-leaved arnica.

In death . . . new life.

Moss in bloom.

Fireweed and heart-leaved arnica.

Wild strawberries.

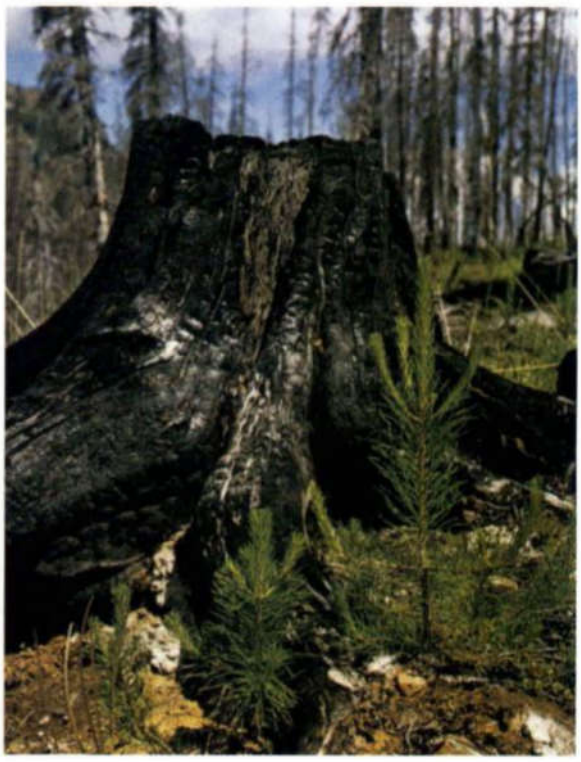
By 1970 the scene had changed. The removal of the forest canopy by the fire created a new environment. It opened up the area to a new growth cycle – to plants which favour disturbed and open sites. Among the first plants to spring up through the blackened earth were wild strawberries, fireweed, and heart-leaved arnica.

A carpet of arnica.

In succeeding years the fireweed and arnica spread and carpeted the ground. The desolation of 1968 was transformed in the early 1970s to a profusion of colour and beauty. Other species of plant life were establishing footholds – the wild rose, twin flower, moss, bunchberry, ragwort, and Indian paintbrush.

The flower carpeting adds a dimension of beauty as well as life support for insects, bird life, and small mammals which have returned to the area. The larger animal life that was destroyed or driven out by the fire will not re-establish until forest cover returns.

Trail through the burn area.



The old and the new.

Columbian ground squirrel.

The lodgepole pine will eventually reforest the area in the first step of the long, successional process which will some day 'climax' in a mature coniferous forest of fir and spruce . . . given no intervening fires. It will take nearly 200 years for this cycle to complete itself. The lodgepole pine has already established a foothold with strong, healthy seedlings.

The 'work of nature' is well underway in the burn area and in the years ahead its perfection will be even more apparent. ◆

Lodgepole pine.

C. T. HATFIELD

Early morning at Lodestone Lake Camp, August 1973.

ON THE BRIGADE TRAIL

BY H. R. HATFIELD

The author, now 69, has lived most of his life in the valley of the southern Okanagan. In retirement from engineering construction work his interest has been the tracing and preservation of the area's early brigade trails. Quotations from H B Record Society volumes are made with permission of the Company.

IN THE SUMMER OF 1967, I, with several friends, started searching out and remarking a portion of the old brigade trail from Fort Hope to Thompson's River (Kamloops). For twelve years from 1849 to 1860 this trail was used by the Hudson's Bay Company to carry goods between the Pacific Coast and a vast stretch of territory that lies west of the Rockies and east of the Cascade Range. Each year since 1967 our search to re-locate the section from Manson to Lodestone camp has continued. In the winter we studied old documents and maps supplied by the Provincial Archives in Victoria and information from the H B C Archives in London; each summer we searched the ground on foot and re-located and marked additional sections of the route.

The first white men on the early inland trails of what is now southwestern British Columbia were David Stuart and his party, of Astor's Pacific Fur Company. They went up the Okanagan and to Kamloops on Thompson's River in 1811. From this journey came the Okanagan Brigade Trail used by the Astorians until the Pacific Fur Company was taken over by the North West Company in 1813, and by the North West Company until its amalgamation with the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821. In 1826 the Council of the Northern Department of the Hudson's Bay Company at the request of Governor George Simpson decided that all supplies for west of the mountains would go by ship to Fort Vancouver, and hence to the inland posts. The Okanagan was the main supply route for New Caledonia and was used by the annual brigades for twenty-one years.

In 1846 the Oregon Boundary settlement put the lower Columbia River in American territory and that year, Alexander C. Anderson, then in charge of Fort Alexandria was given permission to explore a way to the coast in British territory. He made a remarkable trip, out by the Lillooet River and Harrison Lake to Fort Langley and returning by way of the Fraser, Coquihalla, Nicolum, Snass, and Tulameen. Once more, in 1847 the furs came down and the supplies went up the Okanagan trail, but for various reasons – including the outbreak of Indian wars – it was plain to the Company that a way to the coast in British territory had to be found. James

Douglas and Peter Skene Ogden, in charge west of the mountains, decided against using Anderson's route of 1846 – although, looking back from our present vantage point, this route that Anderson explored from Hope to the Horseguard and the trail that the Indian, Blackeye, showed him across the Tulameen Plateau, would certainly have been the best road. However in 1847, Ovid Allard established Fort Yale at the head of navigation on the Fraser and Anderson was instructed to find a new way over the mountains to it. This was putting the cart before the horse with a vengeance and while Anderson did his best, the only track he could find was a very difficult one.

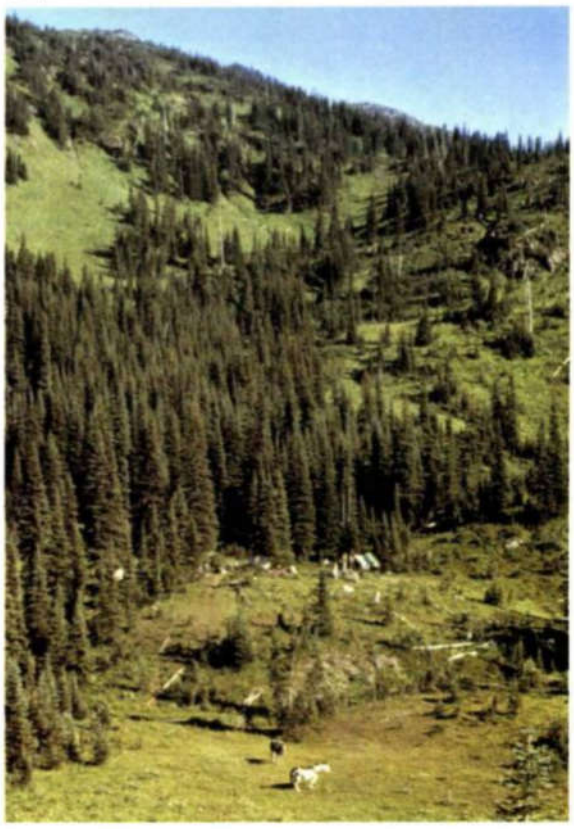
In May of 1848 the combined brigades from New Caledonia, Thompson's River and Fort Colvile set out from Thompson's River for Fort Yale via Nicola Lake, the Coldwater River, Spuzzum and the Douglas Portage. Henry N. Peers, a Company clerk, noted that on their return journey inland by water the brigades reached Yale on 24 July. 'We remained here' he wrote 'till the 2nd August (9 days) during which time half the goods were being carried over the river portage by 80 Indians in three or 4 trips under the superintendence of Messrs. Anderson and Simpson and the remainder sent across Douglasses portage on Horseback in 4 trips of some 35 horses'. At Spuzzum Creek, they were three days 'crossing Baggage & horses . . . some 500 & upwards pieces of goods in 15 Brigades each Brigade having 18 & some a greater number of horses to 2 men. We encamped at the foot of Big Hill where the road leaves Fraser River, many of the Brigades only arriving when pitch dark & consequently great confusion from horses straying with their loads and so forth; several fell down a steep hill on nearing the encampment from weakness.' The 7th of August was rainy and on that morning Jacob Ballenden 'was found dead near the encampment with his gun discharged by his side, shot thro' the heart; it is supposed he committed suicide; the day was spent in collecting strayed horses with their loads and all found but 6 pieces and another horse killed. A war party of the Chute Indians against those of Andersons River passed the camp and created some little alarm. Weather cold and showery, interred the deceased Pere Nobili saying the funeral Service . . . nothing I may say here for the horses to feed on.'

On his return to Thompson's River, Peers was at once instructed to build Fort Hope and to recheck Anderson's route of 1846. James Douglas, in a letter to John Tod at Thompson's River dated 30 October 1848, wrote: 'he [Peers] is particularly desirous that Blackeyes son, the Indian who accompanied him a part of the way on his late journey to this place and left him at the head of the Soaqua should be sent to meet him at that point, as without such assistance he will not be able to find his way into the Similkameen [Tulameen] Valley . . . will you please despatch Montigny and as many whites and Indians as you can muster to open the road . . . which will greatly expedite the work and enable us to complete it in time for the Brigade of 1849'.

There appears to be no record of why Peers did not follow Anderson's route or of how he discovered the new one. To be sure the trail went over the Tulameen Plateau as had been recommended to Anderson by Blackeye. Also from Campement des Femmes to Thompson's River it followed the trail that Blackeye had travelled with Anderson in 1846. But over the mountains, Peers took a quite different way, shorter but – across Manson Ridge at least – much steeper and more difficult.

The first written description that we have in any detail of the trail from Campement des Femmes and over the Manson Ridge is by Eden Colvile. He was at that time co-governor in North America with Sir George Simpson, and he travelled with the first brigades to move westward over the trail in October 1849. Colvile's letter to Sir J. H. Pelly in London gave as much detail as anyone that far away would be likely to comprehend or find of interest. From Lodestone he and his men who were on foot, went to Campement du Chevreuil in one day, covering what was normally two days' travel for the brigades. He noted that work should be done and recommended 'sowing of a sufficient quantity of timothy & white clover at stated encampments for the brigades. The same operation is required at Fort Hope . . . It will be necessary to send a party of men from

Campement du Chevreuil.



C. T. HATFIELD

each end of the road to cut all the fallen timber, as it is very fatiguing to the loaded horses to be continually stepping over these fallen trees, & 3rdly ditches should be cut through the swamps, & where requisite, logs & brush laid over them, so as to afford firm footing for the horses.'

Three years later, in his report to London in July 1852, Colvile reported: 'Considerable improvements have taken place on the road between Thompson's river & Fort Hope, a party of 10 men under the charge of Mr. Peter Ogden Jr. having been employed for nearly two months in improving that part of it which passes over the Mountains between the Similkameen and Fraser's River; and the outcoming Brigades from New Caledonia and Thompson's River, were to leave the latter place on 10 June, at which time the snow on the tops of the hills is sufficiently packed to bear the loaded horses and there is a sufficiency of grass to be found in the vallies . . . Eight acres of land at Fort Hope has been sown out with Timothy seed, and some scattered along the road at the different encampments.'

In another letter of 1852 Colvile described a difficult part of the route, a range of wooded hills that lay between the Tulameen River and Fort Hope. 'I crossed them with loaded pack horses in three days, although the road had only been opened that season. It was through some of the heaviest timbered land I ever saw. I measured one tree that was forty-two feet in circumference, and the avoidance of such trees as had fallen across the road necessarily consumed much time.'

During our re-location of the lost trail, we found that coming to one of these huge fallen trees was most disconcerting. They were too large to climb over and it was impossible to see enough to tell whether one should go right or left to get around. The timothy and tall oat grass grown long ago for fodder – and some thistles that came in with the seed – were still growing at Campement du Chevreuil and at other places along the trail.

The most useful description for re-location of the trail from Fort Hope to Campement des Femmes was written by Lieut H. Spencer Palmer, R. E. in 1859. As one would expect in an official report by a trained engineer, it has compass bearings and distances as well as a fairly detailed description. His map, which had to cover from Fort Hope to Fort Colvile, is to a small scale but useful. Longitudes are off, as was not unusual in those days and for some reason his elevations are even more inaccurate. On the other hand, latitudes are right on and most useful in confirming the locations of old campsites. Palmer travelled the trail in September 1859 with a party under Chief Trader Angus McDonald returning from Fort Hope to Fort Colvile.

Also accompanying the party as far as Campement des Femmes, where they continued on to Kamloops, were Judge Matthew B. Begbie and his staff of two, O'Reilly and Arthur Bushby. Begbie in his reports does not seem to have anything to say about the trail. O'Reilly started a journal but after covering the first day out of Hope on 17 September and the next morning, it faded away until 16 October when they were back at Yale on their way out. The judicial party were on foot and almost the last words in O'Reilly's entry of 18 September, as they reached the top of Manson Ridge at '8½ in the morning', were 'fearful hard work'. While some comment from him on the rest of the trail would have been valuable, anyone who climbs Manson Ridge will understand how the journal came to end there. He mentioned, as does Palmer, the remains of dead horses along the way. He also told of trouble on the first day with the Indian packers looking after the baggage mules, until Mr McDonald 'sets them right again'.

Young Arthur Bushby fresh from England found the second day a difficult one too but kept his personal diary nevertheless. His remark that 'after descending very rapidly we came to the river and crossing it over a tree (risky work) camped on the other side' helps

Palmer Pond.

J. SCRIVENER

Descent from Blackeyes Trail on the Tulameen Plateau.

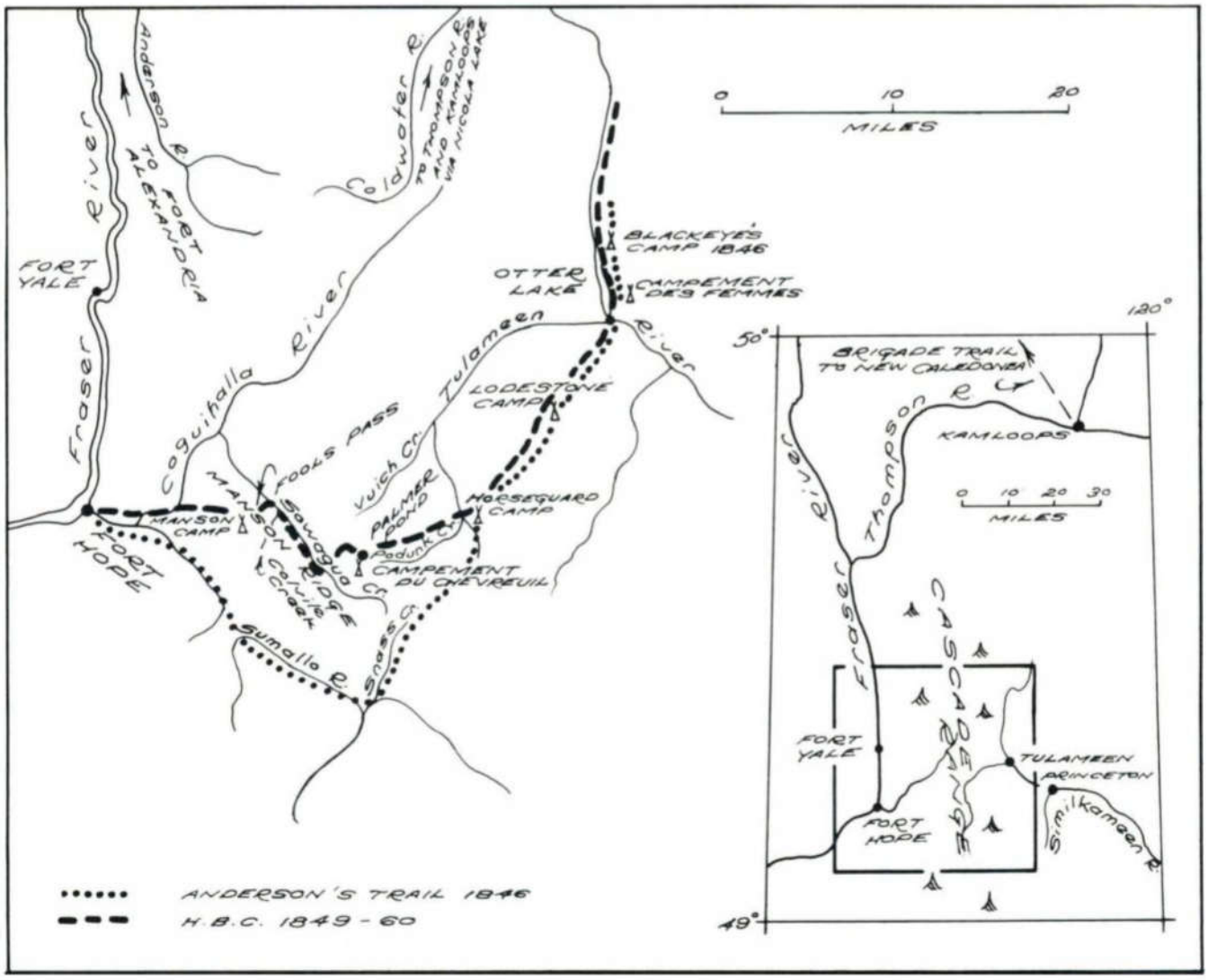
JOHN HATFIELD

confirm the Tulameen River crossing and the location of the Horseguard.

After the Company abandoned the trail for the new routes of 1860 on, there were trappers, hunters, prospectors, timber cruisers, and stockmen who used parts of it for many years. None, or almost none, seems to have written anything about it. Fortunately Podunk Davis, prospector and trapper, took an interest in the old trail and his findings were recorded on paper by the Rev. J. C. Goodfellow of Princeton, B.C. Their work was probably the basis for locating the 'Brigade Trail' and 'Blackeyes Trail' on the Hope-Princeton map of 1939. Goodfellow's description of the trail where it swings westward from Blackeyes Trail on the Tulameen Plateau and where it climbs to the west after crossing the river at the Horseguard has confirmed the location of these points.

We began our probe of the general area in 1967 by back-packing into Podunk Creek from the Tulameen River road and then, discouraged by rain and fog, followed a jeep track up the Whipsaw and hiked in from Wells Lake to the mouth of the Podunk. The following summer we were joined by Eric Jacobson of Princeton, B.C. who had been into the head of the Podunk and over the Cascade summit to within sight of Campement du Chevreuil. With three horses to pack supplies, we again approached from the north side, via Vuich Creek, then followed the trail up the top end of the Podunk Creek Valley, over the summit and down to Campement du Chevreuil. The trail crossed the open alpine slope above Palmer Pond – 'a pretty sequestered little lake . . . invisible except from the rocks immediately surrounding it'. It was perched on the edge of the deep valley of Montigny Creek. Through a break in the rock wall on its far side a small stream flowed out, to drop to the valley floor far below.

On that first descent from the Cascade summit we were off trail and the sharp drop to Campement du



Chevreuil with the packed horses was somewhat hazardous. We arrived safely, at Palmer's campsite '. . . a sheltered spot with wood, water and grass'. At our backs the last ridge of the Cascades curved around and on this slope the deer fed in the open spaces between the trees and each afternoon a golden eagle or two wheeled by searching the bluffs of rock for hoary marmots. A small stream, now Chevreuil Creek, starts along the bottom of the talus slope, circles one side of the partly wooded campsite, then drops over a rock face into a pool where we enjoyed a bath in the ice-cold water.

To the west across the valley of the Sowaqua is Manson Ridge with its peaks and snowfields. Three ribbons of silver water twist their way down from the snow and, with the main stream of the Sowaqua tumbling along the bottom, fill the whole valley with sound. On three sides of the camp itself, the ground is open, grassy, rolling mountainside with a few gnarled white trunks left from a great fire which swept by long ago.

Somewhere in the camp area lies the mortal remains of Chief Trader Paul Fraser who was killed on the trail by a falling tree in 1855. Lieutenant Palmer noted in his report of 1859: 'Within a few yards of the spot where we had pitched our tent, a neat pile of rough hewn logs marks his lonely grave.' There was a divergence of opinion among his contemporaries as to Fraser's character. John McLean described him as a 'young gentleman of a gay and lively disposition'. Eden Colvile, with whom Fraser travelled from Fort Garry to Fort Victoria in 1849, complained of his tedious stories and added that he was the 'most diabolical snorer I ever met with.' James Douglas wrote in 1848 that 'Paul Fraser can tell as good a story as any man in the country, and in remarking on his death commented 'a grave on a lonely mountain is the reward of forty years wandering in the Indian Country.' Fraser did not like the trail. In an undated letter to Douglas, suggesting the possibility of another route, he comments that 'it could not be worse than Manson Ridge.'

After leaving Campement du Chevreuil we had a fairly rough and difficult descent of some twenty-five hundred feet to the Sowaqua. Camping by the creek that night, our packhorses had only horsetails to eat. To my surprise they enjoyed them immensely and looked in vain for more. The next day we crossed and tried to go down the Sowaqua. The 'boue biers' or to use the American phrase 'mud holes' described by Colvile were still there. Finally, faced with no visible trail, no horse feed, the primeval forest on our left, and the jungle of the old burn ahead, we decided it was best to turn homeward.

The following summer Eric Jacobsen and I drove up the Peers Creek logging road in June. Looking up Manson Ridge at the head of the valley we re-read Palmer's journal: 'We arose at dawn and soon commenced the laborious ascent of the mountain by a zig-zag trail, very steep and rocky'. Eric said that if he

J. SCRIVENER

View from Manson Ridge above Sowaqua Creek.

were coming up this valley and going over the ridge with horses he would go that way, pointing to a certain part of the mountain. We went that way and there was the old trail, somewhat washed out and overgrown but unmistakable and with ancient blazes, zig-zagging up the mountain as Peers had marked it out in 1848 or 1849. Two months later, we went up the Peers Creek road again, headed east over the trail with our packs and by 20 August we had crossed the Sowaqua. In our journal we wrote 'Across the flat to the bottom of the big hill and on a long slant northeastward up the hill we had a fairly easy and pleasant morning and early afternoon . . . Late in the afternoon came a gentle rain and a thick fog. All landmarks disappeared and we had to keep close together to see each other. We knew that we had crossed below Campement du Chevreuil and had to work our way back to the right and up but that was all. We kept following Eric hopefully and at last there we were, cold, wet, and exhausted again but there.' Camp was a sheet of polythene tied to trees and sticks and a ground sheet of the same. On the same hill in 1859 Arthur Bushby recorded that he had been revived by a cup of brandy and some raw salmon that an Indian had given him.

In 1970 we went up the logging road which runs for several miles up the Sowaqua from the Coquihalla. Setting up a base camp in Fools Pass we traced the trail to the summit of Manson Ridge and from a two-night camp there, traced and marked it down the west side. This was not all easy going when we were still searching for some of the more elusive pieces. Crossing back we got into a mess of huge fallen trees criss-crossing one another, with dense alder, bracken, and devil's club up to our heads and higher, filling in all the criss-crosses. Back at camp finally with 'a roaring fire and tea and standing around in underwear, which dries quickest when on, we dried shirts, trousers, socks, sweaters and what have you.'

The next day from the base camp we worked up the Sowaqua valley, the trail for the first mile or more actually descending from Fools Pass to the main valley floor. In the afternoon we crossed the stream now

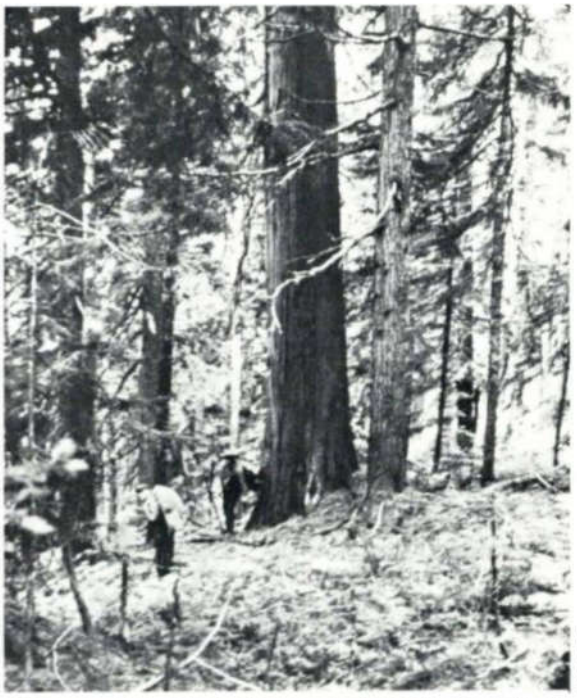
known as Colvile Creek and then lost the trail where it had been engulfed in the burn. Further on we found another section in the woods; it again disappeared. Camping on Colvile Creek that night, we followed the edge of the woods again in the morning hoping the trail might once more emerge, but in the time that we had, we could not find it. The rain began again and somewhat cold and wet, we headed back for base re-marking the trail as we went. To travel in the primeval forest in this section is an experience in itself. In most places, once one learns to recognize it, the depression made 'in the forest's ferny floor' by the thousands of horses that travelled the trail can easily be seen. The long dark scars of the old blazes, now completely healed over, are still visible on the great trees.

On 5 June 1971 Eric and his young son and I went up the Peers Creek road. From the edge of the logging slash we completed the re-marking of the trail up the lower part of Manson Ridge. Higher up we camped for the night on some eight feet of snow, the only difficulty being to get firewood; this we finally accomplished by pulling down a big dead limb. On the summit of the ridge in the morning we estimated the snow depth to be about fifteen feet and had to look down into the holes melted around the tree trunks to see the blazes, flagging tape, and metal markers of previous years.

Later the same year twenty-nine of us, twenty Venturer Scouts and nine men, set out from Lodestone and on 8 August walked out on to the Peers Creek road by the site of Manson Camp and on down to the Coquihalla. The first day's travel was along the jeep road now occupying the ancient Indian hunting road, Blackeyes Trail, then turning right to the edge of the plateau and down some two thousand feet to the Tulameen River where it is joined by Podunk Creek in the vicinity of the Horseguard.

Decending from the Tulameen Plateau to the river, we kept watching for signs of the trail without success. Palmer wrote that from the Horseguard the trail went up 'a steep defile' to the plateau. We toiled up and down the three creek valleys which seemed to fit this description but found no trail. Sometimes on steep hillsides covered with slippery grass or in rocky, precipitous and overgrown creek bottoms this, with supplies for nine days on one's back, was severe toil indeed. It all became very baffling. Eric felt that the trail must have gone by Squakin Creek but I resisted this as not conforming with Palmer's map. Then in 1972 one of our parties went this way and found a big trail with very old blazes starting down from the plateau.

That same year we found the meadow where in 1859 the horses of Chief Trader Angus McDonald's brigade were driven back across the river for the night. We followed the trail west to where Bushby noted the steep descent to the river. This piece cuts across a corner so that a traveller on the trail does not see the junction of the Tulameen and the Podunk, explaining why Palmer's map does not show the Tulameen upstream, long a puzzle to us.



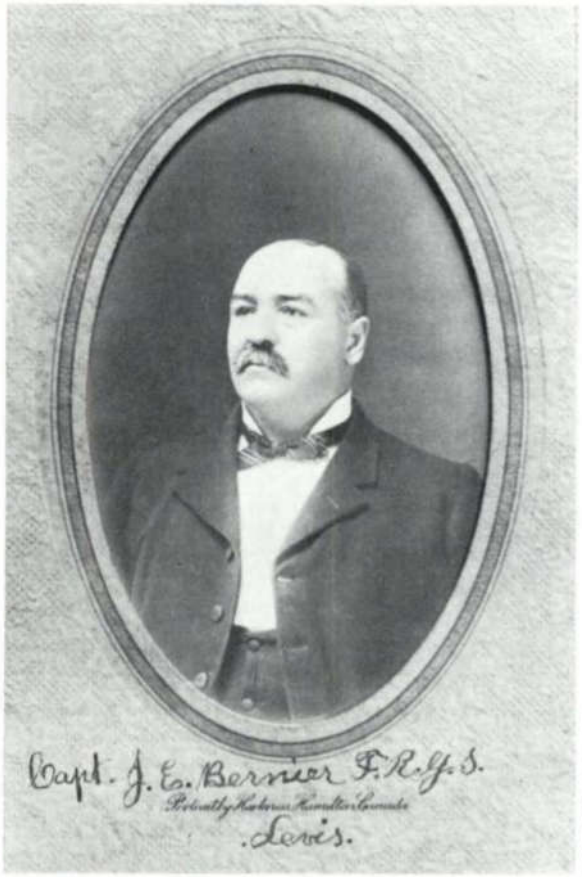
H. BARR

After more than a hundred years the depression made by the hooves of thousands of horses is still visible in the forest near Manson Creek.

In 1973, the trail was one hundred and twenty-five years old, and in that year four exploring parties worked at different times between Lodestone Camp and the Sowaqua crossing. One of these, made up of nine men and two boys, included my grandson, three sons, and myself. We had seven horses as a pack train to carry supplies and a chain saw, a luxury indulged in only once before since we started on the trail in 1967.

Due to the work of a number of people we can now say that, with very few minor adjustments easily made when time permits, the old trail is marked and clear from Lodestone Camp to the Sowaqua and marked from east of Colvile Creek to Manson Camp. Left to pull us back for yet another year is the exact location of the Sowaqua crossing and that section of the trail from there to east of Colvile Creek.

A reserve has now been set out to protect the trail on the west side of Manson Ridge from further logging, and it is hoped that steps will be taken to set aside the remainder of the trail and enough of its surroundings to keep the feel of the wilderness. A number of conservation and historical groups have asked for an extension of Manning Provincial Park to save, not only the remaining part of this Brigade Trail, but portions of the Dewdney, Hope, Whatcom and Ghost Pass trails and the streams, lakes, and mountains of the area as well. All this, we hope, will enable our people to enjoy the toil and beauty of the trail and absorb some of our heritage of history through the soles of their feet. ◆



HARKNESS, HAMILTON

Captain Bernier used this studio portrait taken in 1910 as his 'official' photograph for at least 15 years.

FAREWELL VOYAGES

Bernier and the 'Arctic'

By Richard Finnie

For aiding his memory, the author thanks the following fellow survivors of 'Arctic' voyages with whom he has recently exchanged letters: William F. Choat and Roy Tash, Toronto (1924); J. Dewey Soper, Edmonton (1923-24); W. H. Grant, Ottawa, and Robert A. Logan, Duluth (1922); and for special data: Dudley Copland and Thomas E. Appleton, Ottawa and Shirlee Smith, H B C Archivist, London.

Photographs are by the author unless otherwise credited.

The 'Arctic' heads down the St Lawrence River from Quebec. Levis is in the background.

IN DECEMBER 1934 Captain Joseph Elzéar Bernier died at the age of eighty-two in his home at Levis, Quebec. Not far away, a ship he had guided on hazardous voyages through icy seas during the first quarter of this century was already dead or dying. Bernier and the CGS *Arctic* made northern Canadian history together, yet both went without fanfare to their Valhalla.

Few men are left who were with the captain and his ship throughout their last two voyages in 1924 and 1925. I am one of them. Born in the Klondike, though reared in Ottawa, I developed a keen and abiding interest in the Far North and in 1924, when I was seventeen, I seized an opportunity to join an expedition to the Eastern Arctic Archipelago with Captain Bernier and the *Arctic*.

Then only a few years older than I was, the *Arctic* was obsolete and nearly worn out, a carry-over from the days of wooden ships and iron men. She had been built at Kiel, Germany, for a two-year Antarctic expedition starting soon after her launching in 1901, and was christened *Gauss*. Bernier bought her for the Canadian government in 1904 at a bargain price of $75,000. She was renamed *Arctic*.

Bernier had visions of taking her through the Northwest Passage and perhaps to the North Pole. To his everlasting regret, countermanding orders stood in his way. The first assignment for him with his new ship turned out to be a twelve-month patrol to the western side of Hudson Bay, carrying members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police who were to control foreign traders and whalers who were exploiting Eskimos of the region and slaughtering wildlife (1904-05).

The *Arctic* was a barquentine, a three-masted, top-sail wooden vessel with her foremast square-rigged. Her beam was 37 feet and she was 165 feet long. She had an auxiliary 275-horsepower steam-engine driven by a coal-fired boiler. Her registered tonnage was 518. Her top speed without sails was five knots; with sails set and a favourable wind she could sometimes attain eight.

She had a two-foot-thick hull of oak and pitch-pine, sheathed fore and aft with steel plates. It was egg-shaped so that when pinched by pack ice it would rise and thus avoid being crushed. This design did not provide for stability in an open, turbulent sea, as every passenger with a sensitive stomach discovered.

Captain Bernier made the most of what he could do, or was permitted to do, with the *Arctic*. This was chiefly to plant the Canadian flag, literally and figuratively, on all of the islands he could reach north of the mainland between the 60th and 141st meridians of west longitude.

Most of the larger islands had been at least superficially explored and charted from the 16th century to the 19th by a succession of Englishmen and, later, Americans and Norwegians. Whaling ships entered arctic waters from the Atlantic as far back as the 18th century, but whatever discoveries they made were unreported. Some of the islands were occupied by Eskimos long before they were seen by Europeans – with the possible exception of early Norsemen. Other islands were never seen by any human being until well into the 20th century; the last of these were discovered by Vilhjalmur Stefansson during his 1913-18 expedition.

As early as 1897 a Canadian government ship-borne expedition headed by William Wakeham, investigating the navigability of Hudson Bay, made a side trip to Cumberland Sound, Baffin Island, and proclaimed sovereignty over this and adjacent arctic islands.

The first Canadian explorer to set foot on the most northerly island, Ellesmere, was A. P. Low, a government geologist. In 1904 he sailed in the steamship *Neptune* as far as Cape Herschel on Smith Sound, where he raised a flag and took formal possession of Ellesmere Island for Canada.

Bernier was then in Hudson Bay with the *Arctic*, but in 1906 he began a series of three long voyages (1906-07, 1908-09, 1910-11) to various islands now called the Queen Elizabeth group as well as to others farther south. Bernier found no new land. He simply patrolled islands already, at least superficially, charted. He gathered records left by his British predecessors of the 19th century and deposited records and set up cairns of his own. He and specialists with him in the *Arctic* took soundings, observed tides, formation and movement of ice, did coastal surveying and mapping, and field work in meteorology, geology, zoology, and botany.

On his 1908-09 voyage Bernier penetrated west through half the length of McClure Strait to a point between Melville and Banks Islands. It was invitingly open and he might have realized his dream of taking the *Arctic* through the Northwest Passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific (which Roald Amundsen had navigated with a much smaller vessel by a more southerly route, 1903-06) but he lacked authorization to do so and reluctantly turned back. On his next voyage Bernier had the authorization he needed, but this time McClure Strait was blocked by ice.

All of the islands north of the Canadian mainland, which Britain claimed by right of discovery, were ceded to Canada in 1880, so were thereafter considered reasonably secure; but Wakeham and Low and then Bernier, as leaders of Canadian government expeditions, established a purely Canadian claim.

The *Arctic* has always been associated with Bernier, but he was not her only master. In 1912, while he was busy with a private gold-hunting and fur-trading venture on Baffin Island with a small schooner of his own, the *Minnie Maud*, a government scientific expedition headed by W. E. Jackson, a meteorologist who had accompanied Bernier in 1908-09, set out from Quebec with the *Arctic* on a four-month voyage into Hudson Bay as far as Churchill. The captain was then Joseph Couillard of Quebec.

After that, the *Arctic* was withdrawn from northern service and placed on the lower St Lawrence as a

navigational beacon. World War I intervened and not until 1922 did she again have a chance to justify her name: that year she was reconditioned for a new series of annual patrols to the Eastern Arctic Archipelago.

Under the aegis of the Interior Department's newly created Northwest Territories and Yukon Branch (of which my father, O. S. Finnie, was director) the patrols were to be for the combined purposes of maintaining sovereignty in the North, establishing, reprovisioning and remanning outposts of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, seeing to the health and general welfare of the Eskimos, and conducting assorted scientific investigations.

Bernier, now 70, was put in charge of his old ship. Partly because of his age and partly because it was felt that he would have enough to do just to run the *Arctic* — which proved correct — he would not also be expedition commander as in former years. This responsibility was given to a departmental official. In 1922 and 1923 the official chosen was John D. Craig, engineer and Dominion Land Surveyor. In 1923 his wife, Gertrude, became the only woman ever to be a round-trip *Arctic* passenger north of the Arctic Circle.

When plans were being made for the 1924 voyage I heard that there was to be an opening for an assistant wireless operator. Through the winter I devoted most of my after-school time to learning the Morse code, traffic procedures, basic circuitry, and the handling of standard equipment. In the spring I passed a test for a limited certificate and was hired at a monthly salary of $60.

The loading and departure point for the *Arctic* was King's Wharf, Quebec City. I arrived by train a fortnight in advance to help the chief operator, William F. Choat, install new gear and check out an old spark set. The new gear comprised the first short-wave transmitter-receiver to be tried out on shipboard in the Canadian Arctic. With it, radio broadcasts could be heard, but signals could be sent only by key: there was no microphone.

Choat, a cheerful and energetic chap from Toronto, was a couple of years older than I and far ahead of me in radio expertise. He had been a 'ham' with his own station since early 1920, had spent a season as an operator on a Great Lakes grain boat, and now held a first-class commercial licence.

I had never been on a sailing ship before and was fascinated by the *Arctic*, inspecting her from stem to stern and, literally, from bottom to top. Choat and I were agile and had no qualms about climbing the shrouds and ratlines of the three lofty masts and walking yard-arms to put insulators, spreaders, and wires in place for a special antenna system.

Day after day cargo kept coming aboard. There had to be enough food and fuel not only for the planned voyage of several months but also to last as long as two years in the event of our being stranded in polar ice. In addition, there were all the essentials for a new detachment of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and for the reprovisioning of existing detachments on Baffin and Ellesmere Islands.

ROY TASH

Captain Bernier says goodbye to his wife Alma at King's Wharf, Quebec, just before starting his 1924 voyage.

When the holds were filled, the deck was piled high with 200 tons of sacked coal topped off by lumber. The weight of the entire cargo was about 900 tons. The ship sagged under her burden.

Pacing the bridge, scrutinizing the cargo-handling and gruffly shouting orders in salty French, Captain Bernier dominated the scene. I had met him in Ottawa, but now in his own domain I got to know him well. The wireless room was adjacent to his cabin, and in periods of relaxation he would often invite me in for a chat over a cup of tea. Though on occasion he would be generous with his own brand of rum punch and offer cigars to his guests, he never used alcohol or tobacco himself. He prided himself on his self-discipline.

'If you want to be a man' he said 'you must master yourself. I was captain of my own ship when I was seventeen years of age.' Already approaching eighteen, I felt that I was not doing well, at least nautically, as a callow assistant wireless operator.

Bernier was below medium height but massive, with a bull neck and muscular arms and shoulders. Though overweight, he was nimble and sturdy for his age. His head was bald on top, fringed by white hair, and he had a matching walrus moustache. His mouth was large and contained an array of gold bridgework. His nose was bulbous, his chin heavy, his face broad and florid, and his eyes keen. He wore glasses only for reading.

He could be gracious, but he had been too long exposed to the roughness of life at sea to have acquired much finesse. At mealtimes he tucked his napkin under his chin, grabbed whatever he wanted within reach, slurped his soup, and picked his teeth. Once, between voyages, he had been governor of the Quebec jail. He

knew how to give orders and was accustomed to having them obeyed. He was more at home on the bridge of a ship than in a drawing-room.

Self-taught since childhood, he had read most of the works of his predecessors and contemporaries in the Arctic. He was himself an author, having published reports on his early expeditions. He was vain and dogmatic. With a gruff, hoarse voice, he was garrulous in both French and English, which he mixed. He tended to jumble English expressions, one of them being 'This is a wild chase-goose.'

He was proud to be a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society as well as a sea captain, and to favoured persons he gave copies of a studio photograph taken in 1910, under which he wrote: 'Capt. J. E. Bernier, F.R.G.S'. Recounting his exploits, he would often refer to himself as 'your humble servant', which he was not. His naiveté was tinged with guile. But despite his foibles he was a colourful, warm-hearted, and likable character.

All of Bernier's officers and crew were French Canadians from ports along the lower St Lawrence, and most of them had been with him on earlier voyages. The first officer, L. D. Morin, and the second, Leo Lemieux, were captains in their own right. The chief engineer, Albert Theriault, was one of the hardest-working men on board; it was more than a full-time job to keep the worn machinery going under normal conditions, and conditions were seldom normal. Joe Poitras was the carpenter, and he and Napoléon Chassé, the quartermaster, were always busy. Chassé was a short man of great physical strength, unbeatable at hand-wrestling. Jude Gosselin, pale and haggard, was room boy and waiter. Names of others are long forgotten, but they were all good men.

The official party included Frank D. Henderson, DLS, commander of the expedition; Dr Leslie David Livingstone, medical officer (whose biography by Dudley Copland would one day be published with the title *Livingstone of the Arctic*); J. Dewey Soper, naturalist; Ludlow J. Weeks, geologist; Roy Tash, cinematographer; and a half-dozen members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. There was also Dr Alfred Sidney Johnson from San Francisco, an elderly optometrist and geographer associated with Rand McNally. The voyage was hard on him and he died not long afterwards.

We cast off on 5 July and headed for the Gulf of St Lawrence and the Strait of Belle Isle.

The dining saloon, galley and all of the living quarters except the captain's were below the water line. There were wash-basins and toilets, but not a single shower or bathtub. (The following year a porcelain tub and a hand-cranked washing machine, neither of them with pipe connections, were placed on deck and immediately buried under cargo.)

The crew's quarters, both aft and in the forepeak, were fitted with stacked, narrow bunks and were filthy. For officers and passengers there were two-berth state-

ROY TASH

Commander Frank Henderson (right) greets Inspector C. E. Wilcox, RCMP, who boarded the 'Arctic' at Blacklead Island en route to Pangnirtung. In the background are Second Officer Leo Lemieux, Richard Finnie and Dr A. S. Johnson.

rooms with mahogany-panelled walls, desks, chairs, storage cabinets and drawers, and gimbals holding kerosene lamps for use when there was no electricity. All of the state-rooms were cramped except the commander's and the doctor's. The RCMP constables shared a room with enough stacked bunks to accommodate eight or ten, with a few chairs and a table on which they ate, wrote, and played cards. Lack of laundry facilities allowed us a change of bedding only once or twice during the voyage. Bedbugs were plentiful and energetic, though we combatted them with insect powder.

The RCMP room was off a corridor at the foot of a stairway to the deck, near the forward end of the saloon, and beyond the aft end of the saloon were a pantry and galley. State-rooms ranged along a corridor at either side.

In the saloon, which served as a lounge between meals, there was a long table faced by bolted-down armchairs on the outer side and a bench on the inner side against the port wall. The bench, plush-covered, continued around the saloon, and above it were racks displaying an assortment of novels and travel books. There was also a wind-up Victrola with a quantity of popular records, all of them scratched, which could be played only when the ship was motionless.

One of my duties was to edit and type news bulletins which Choat usually wrote out in longhand as they came by Morse late in the evening from a long-wave station in Louisburg, Nova Scotia. Combining them with whatever I was able to pick up when he was off watch, I made carbon copies and placed them in the state-rooms. A stench of stale air met my nostrils as I opened each door. There was no ventilation.

The weather was beautiful as the *Arctic* plodded down the St Lawrence to the gulf. In the Strait of Belle

Isle, new-comers gazed in wonderment at their first iceberg. Then we rounded the coast of Labrador and were in the North Atlantic, heading for Baffin Island.

This was the 11th of July. That night and the next day a strong wind increased to gale force accompanied by rain. With her egg-shaped hull, the *Arctic* rolled and pitched unmercifully.

'The ship was kept on her course' wrote Commander Henderson, 'but heavy seas began to break over the rail. The deck load of coal absorbed a great deal of water and also prevented the escape of water through the scuppers. To a ship so heavily laden as the *Arctic* and already so low in the water this proved a serious matter.'

Just how serious it was no one realized until around nine-thirty in the evening, when an enormous wave engulfed us. The ship was thrown so far over by the impact that the deck cargo was jarred loose from its moorings and shifted dangerously. Wave after wave followed. A jammed-open steel door let water surge into the boiler room to a depth of five feet, quenching the fire.

Bernier bellowed 'All hands on deck!'

He gave Bill Choat a chilling order. 'Broadcast SOS.' With his regular equipment Choat tapped frantically for ten minutes until the generator stopped. He immediately switched to a spark coil activated by storage batteries and resumed calling at intervals for a couple of hours. There was no response. Eventually, I relieved him at the key, my ears straining under headphones, but the effort was futile. We were too far away from any ship that could hear us or come to our rescue.

It would have been no consolation to us had we known that, by a fluke, a ham operator in Arlington, Virginia, picked up the SOS with our call letters, VDM, and thoughtfully notified Ottawa by mail.

The night of July 12th was one of sheer terror and misery. Everybody was drenched and the water was icy cold. First Officer Morin was swept overboard by a wave, but another dumped him back on deck. He was shaken but unharmed. While the crisis was at its height the men behaved in various ways. Some prayed, some cursed, some gave way to despair. Some were too sick to care what happened. Dr Johnson wanted to help. He was small and frail, and to get him out of the way Bernier told him to go to the wheel-house and steer. He clung to the wheel for hours, singing hymns, unaware that the rudder connection was broken.

Able-bodied and not subject to seasickness, I kept active but was thoroughly frightened and at one low point prayed 'Oh God, if you get us out of this mess and back to dry land, I'll never go to sea again!'

Bernier wept. He had been a captain for fifty-five years, sailing around the world and commanding 107 ships. He had lost only one, but that was in a World War I convoy and he had saved all his men. What brought tears to his eyes now was the fear that his record would be spoiled.

A hand-pump was rigged over the forward hold and Choat and I were among the men assigned to it. At the same time, a bucket brigade was organized to try to bail out the engine room. We all worked until we were exhausted, but the ship was slowly settling. Henderson and Bernier handed around bottles of rum, which warmed our bellies but gave us no cheer.

A last desperate measure was to jettison the deck cargo. We worked in pairs. Clinging to the rail, we would wait until the deck was awash, then pick up 100-pound sacks of coal, one after another, and drop them over the side. I was teamed with a RCMP constable, Hughie Margetts, who disappeared under an incoming wave. I thought he was lost. He popped up with a grin. 'I was just fishing for my hat' he said. Another constable, expecting to die momentarily, thoroughly relieved himself without bothering to lower his pants. Later he was able to laugh at his discomfiture, but not much.

By daylight some two hundred tons of coal plus lumber had been thrown overboard. The ship righted herself and rode more easily. The forward hand-pump was still being manned, and another was set up for the engine room, replacing the bucket line. We worked in shifts of four hours broken by four-hour rest periods and never took our clothes off.

In a couple of days the water level in the engine room began to drop noticeably, which raised our spirits, but when it got low enough for us to go below we found the

engine and all its related machinery choked with coal that had broken through a bulkhead from the storage bunker.

The boiler was eventually fired to give us steam for electricity. Choat was then able to send a message to Ottawa about our situation, which may have been reassuring to people at home but was of no help to us. Before the engine could be started, all of the loose coal had to be grubbed by hand from the moving parts. This was a back-breaking chore in the dark and clammy bowels of the ship.

Our travail lasted nearly a week from the day the storm struck us until we were again under power in a calming sea. With sails set and engine throbbing, the *Arctic* resumed her course.

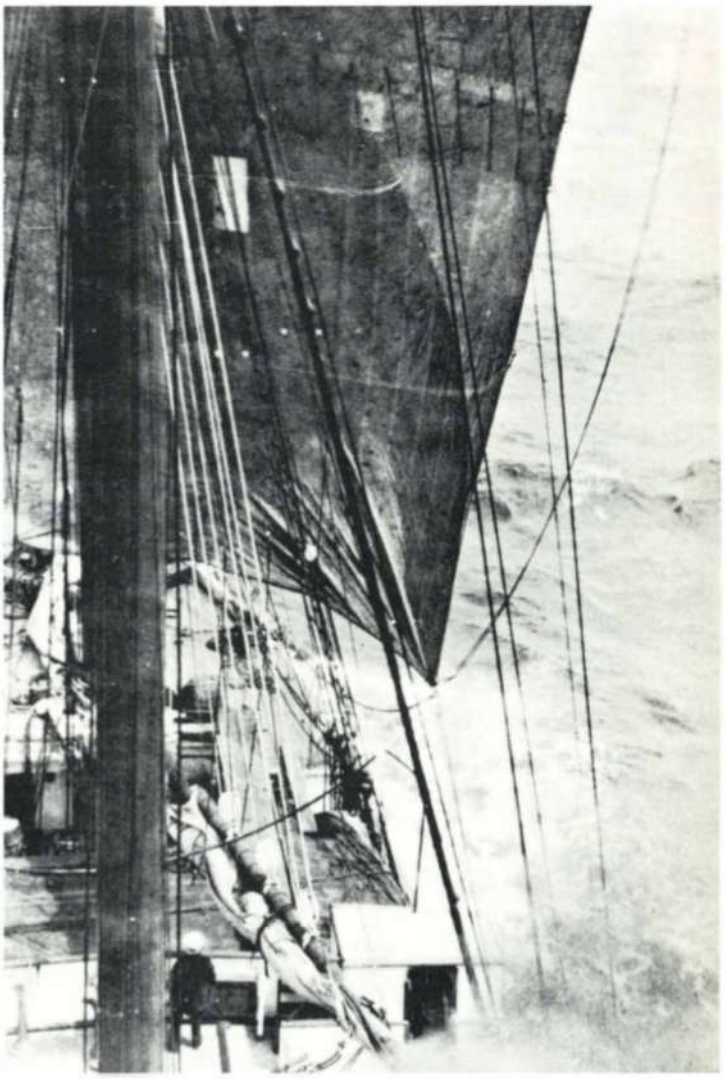
On 22 July we dropped anchor at Pangnirtung, Cumberland Sound, Baffin Island. Here J. Dewey Soper left us to spend a year observing and collecting the flora and fauna of the region. While passengers and freight were being lightered to shore, Dr Livingstone set up a clinic and treated Eskimos and whites for whatever ills they had accumulated since his last visit – he had been the *Arctic's* medical officer in 1922 and 1923. Chiefly because I wasn't squeamish, I became his regular volunteer assistant and anaesthetist (ether and chloroform) for operations.

After a call at Godhavn, Greenland, where local coal was bought to replace part of our jettisoned supply, we sailed as far north as Kane Basin, 750 miles from the Pole. Here, on the Ellesmere Island shore, a cabin was built and stocked for the use of the police making winter patrols from their Craig Harbour detachment 150 miles to the south.

While Livingstone and I were walking around nearby Pim Island he picked up a gold-monogrammed spectacle-case which had probably been dropped by an officer of the Sir George Nares expedition of 1875-76.

We reprovisioned and remanned the Craig Harbour detachment, whose main building had burned down in February; set up a new RCMP detachment at Dundas Harbour, Devon Island; inspected a coal deposit noted long before by Captain Bernier on Bylot Island; visited Pond Inlet at the northeasterly end of Baffin Island, with its RCMP and Hudson's Bay Company posts and Eskimo residents; put in at Clyde River, where there was a new H B C post, and at Home Bay south of Cape Henry Kater where we had a first and last interview with Hector Pitchforth, an eccentric agent of a small Scottish trading company, who was fated to die there in solitude two years later.

Homeward bound, we ran into rough weather and the ship, now being light, bobbed like a cork. So inured were we to discomfort by this time that we almost enjoyed it. Eighty-two days and six thousand miles after our departure we docked at Quebec. I had celebrated my eighteenth birthday north of the Arctic Circle and, after all I had been through, I now considered myself both grown up and a bona fide explorer.



Bernier stands on the bridge as the 'Arctic' heads north with a favourable wind and her square sail set.

Polar bears slaughtered for the 'Arctic' larder. Dr L.D. Livingstone, chief marksman, is at right. Witnesses are (left) RCMP Constable H.P. Lee, Richard Finnie and William F. Choat.

ROY TASH

The depot on Ellesmere Island's east coast, erected in 1924 for RCMP patrols from Craig Harbour, 150 miles to the south.

Commander Frank Henderson observes the sewing of seal skins on the frame of a kayak at Pond Inlet. The dowager, left, was known as 'the Duchess'.

The following year, 1925, the chief radio operator for the voyage was an amiable Canadian Westinghouse technician from Montreal, Robert M. Foster. With my help, he was to achieve a nearly unbroken record of non-communication between the Far North and the outside world. The fault was neither his nor mine; it was the result of the chronic failure of the ship's generator and lack of steam to run it.

With the same complement of officers and seamen as before, our party comprised George Patton Mackenzie, commander of the expedition; Dr L. D. Livingstone, medical officer; Ludlow J. Weeks, geologist; George H. Valiquette, cinematographer; Harwood E. Steele, son of the late Sir Samuel B. Steele of the 'Mounted', author, journalist, and secretary to the commander; and five members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, among whom was Staff Sergeant (later Inspector) Alfred Herbert Joy, one of the greatest of northern dog-team travellers.

Also on board was Nookudlah, who was being returned to his home at Pond Inlet on parole from Manitoba's Stony Mountain Penitentiary where he had served part of a sentence for manslaughter. Sergeant Joy, who had arrested him, was now his protector. Nookudlah was dying of tuberculosis.

Captain Bernier was master of the ship but again he was to defer to the designated official in charge of the expedition. On previous voyages the strong-willed captain had seldom been challenged by departmental officials, who bowed to his renown and experience as an arctic explorer and navigator. But at last he was to meet his match. The new commander, a former gold commissioner of the Yukon, was a man of imposing stature and bearing, twenty years younger than the captain. George Mackenzie was tolerant and good-humoured but conscientious and fearless. He wanted straight answers to his questions and he made his own decisions.

From the very start of the voyage on 1 July, when the *Arctic* was moving away from King's Wharf, things began to go wrong. We grazed a moored vessel and one of our lifeboats was bashed in and torn from one of its davits. Then our engine broke down.

Emergency repairs were made at L'Islet, Bernier's birthplace, where a monument now stands in his honour. It took us a week to get as far as Anticosti Island in the Gulf of St Lawrence. The *Arctic* sailed through the Strait of Belle Isle and was off the coast of Labrador when the engine failed again.

Next came heavy seas as we sighted our first ice floes and scattered bergs. The ship pitched and rolled. Everything not securely tied down went adrift. The deck was continuously awash. Rolling reached a point of no return. The ship would tremble with agonizing uncertainty at the end of a roll before sluggishly righting herself. Whether they were seasick or not, all hands became nerve-wracked and fatigued from the effort of clinging to whatever supports they could find to avoid injury.

The ship leaked more and more, her timbers strained and her seams loosened by too many encounters with ice and storms. When the sea subsided, an auxiliary pump driven by a portable gasoline motor on deck (an innovation since last year) barely kept pace with incoming water while engine repairs were being made and we kept going under sail.

Approaching Cumberland Sound, Baffin Island, en route to Pangnirtung, we were trapped in ice fields for three weeks. Some of us scrambled down ladders for exercise on large floes. I took many a pounding from stalwarts of the RCMP, several of whom were champion

F. D. HENDERSON

Hector Pitchforth, Home Bay agent of the Sabellum Trading Company, photographed in 1924.

Staff Sergeant (later Inspector) A. H. Joy, RCMP, one of the greatest of arctic dog-team travellers.

boxers. With youthful bravado I went swimming in open leads. On one occasion our hand-turned washing machine was brought out and a lot of dirty clothing was run through it. I doubt that it was ever used again. Our drinking-water tanks were replenished through a long hose from pools in heavy floes where the old sea ice had turned to fresh water.

Our monotonous diet of preserved beef and pork and canned goods was occasionally supplemented by a hapless polar bear who wandered within shooting distance. As a nature-lover I abhorred each execution, with a dozen rifles blasting the bewildered victim. A live polar bear on the ice or in the water is a beautiful sight; a bloody, wounded, or dead one is not. I did welcome fresh meat, nevertheless, and found polar bear meat as palatable as beef.

Relations between Mackenzie and Bernier became strained when landmarks revealed that we were seventy miles from where the captain had placed us on his chart. His pride had prevented his seeking or accepting the observations of his first and second officers, both qualified navigators, and he was loath to admit error. He became evasive when confronted by Mackenzie who later asked Dr Livingstone if he had noticed anything wrong with the captain. 'Either he is crazy or I am' he said. The captain was now 73 years old and, like his ship, was showing wear and tear.

His age and bulk notwithstanding, Bernier would have himself hoisted by a winch to the crows-nest, sixty-five feet or more above the deck, and he would stay there for hours with his binoculars, looking for leads in the ice and shouting instructions to his helmsman whenever the ship could be manoeuvered.

When the *Arctic* was at last extricated, our Pangnirtung visit was deferred. We made a northeasterly traverse of Davis Strait to Godhavn, where we paid a courtesy call and from Danish officials received clearance for stops at other harbours in North Greenland. We then proceeded towards Etah.

While the ship was undergoing one of her interminable engine repairs and lay helplessly becalmed, an iceberg rising 150 feet out of the water bore down on her, terrifying everybody on board. Bergs have a tendency to shed king-size chunks or roll over. This one could have wiped us out. Providentially, with our sails raised, a favourable breeze wafted us away.

On 19 August, the *Arctic* dropped anchor at Etah, celebrated as Robert E. Peary's main base for his attempts to reach the North Pole. Two other vessels lay in the harbour. They were the schooner *Bowdoin* and the steamship *Peary*, both carrying members of an expedition under the auspices of the United States Navy and the National Geographic Society.

In command was Donald B. MacMillan, veteran arctic explorer and one of Peary's assistants in 1908-09. Second in command was Eugene McDonald, president of Zenith Radio Corporation, who was experimenting with long-distance, short-wave broadcasting of voice and music. Attached to the expedition was Lieutenant Commander (later Rear Admiral) Richard E. Byrd, heading a naval unit of eight men with three Loening single-engine amphibian aircraft, one of which was out of commission.

Courtesy visits were exchanged, in the course of which Byrd told Mackenzie that he and his crew had been making reconnaissance flights and shooting photographs over Ellesmere Island. They had already landed at Flagler Fiord and Sawyer Bay on the island's east coast to deposit emergency fuel and provisions for future flights. Byrd had seen Axel Heiberg, just to the west of

Conference on board the 'Arctic' at Etah in August 1925. Left to right: Radio Operator Robert M. Foster, Commander George P. Mackenzie, Eugene McDonald, RCMP Inspector C.E. Wilcox, and Captain Bernier. McDonald, president of Zenith Radio Corporation of Chicago, was second-in-command of the 1925 MacMillan expedition.

Ellesmere, but had not attempted a landing because its bays were filled with ice.

The question of Byrd's rights to fly over and land on either of these Canadian arctic islands was not brought up at the outset. It was a matter of some delicacy, since both expeditions were meeting in a foreign harbour.

Later, Mackenzie sent his secretary, Harwood Steele, to the *Peary*, where Byrd was quartered, to offer him a permit – if he did not have one – to continue to fly over Canadian territory and effect landings in the interests of scientific exploration, as required by recently enacted legislation. Byrd received Steele politely, saying he would confer with MacMillan, then report to Mackenzie.

Within an hour, having changed from work clothes into full uniform (presumably to present an appearance of authority) Byrd boarded the *Arctic* and declared to Mackenzie that MacMillan had informed him that whatever permission was needed had already been granted by the Canadian government. Mackenzie was sceptical, but he had no way of checking, since our radio transmitter was dead.

Twelve years later I spent an evening with MacMillan, who then told me categorically that Byrd had not consulted him about a permit while we were at Etah in the summer of 1925. However, before starting on his expedition of that year, MacMillan explained, he had been advised by a state department official in Washington to avoid seeking or accepting a permit to visit arctic islands thought at that time to be unoccupied – specifically Ellesmere and Axel Heiberg – because Canadian sovereignty over them had not yet been recognized by the United States. Byrd had evidently taken it upon himself to try to pull the wool over Mackenzie's eyes.

Whether MacMillan, Byrd or the US State Department knew it or not (and undoubtedly MacMillan did) Ellesmere had been permanently occupied and patrolled by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police since 1922. Prompted to some extent by the Etah incident, Inspector Joy and other members of the RCMP patrolled Axel Heiberg and adjacent islands as well as Ellesmere in 1926 and thereafter.

A romanticized biography of Bernier published in 1957 placed him in the leading role at Etah, with only a passing reference to an unnamed 'administrative officer'. It appeared that Bernier (not Mackenzie) carried on key conversations with the leaders of the MacMillan expedition, proving himself to be a talented diplomat as well as a sea captain and explorer. Instead of speaking of a permit, with a display of cordial hospitality he called attention to RCMP posts where travellers in trouble could get help but convinced MacMillan and Byrd that their program should be cut short because of the lateness of the season and the prevalence of ice. Further, as a result of what was termed 'Bernier's mission', MacMillan came to respect Canada's ownership of the arctic islands concerned and was careful to obtain a licence for each of his subsequent trips northward. This account would have pleased the venerable captain, who always wanted to be the head man. [1]

We left Etah on 21 August and crossed Kane Basin to Ellesmere Island. The next day, while we were offloading supplies at the RCMP outpost on Rice Strait, 78° 46' north latitude, two airplanes appeared from the direction of Etah and circled above us for a few minutes before turning back.

The MacMillan expedition soon packed up and went south. Byrd had set a record: his planes were the first to fly over and land at any of Canada's arctic islands. They

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1. Pertinent facts of the Etah incident and the political ramifications surrounding them are accurately detailed in a scholarly paper 'Arctic Controversy: the 1925 Byrd-MacMillan Example' by D. H. Dinwoodie in the March 1972 issue of *The Canadian Historical Review*.

were also the last of foreign registry to do so without clearance.

Despite repeated breakdowns and mishaps we completed our rounds, with stops at outposts and settlements on Ellesmere, Devon, and Baffin Islands, and after a struggle of over three months our bruised and leaking vessel docked at Quebec City. Her final northern voyage had ended.

Although I never forgot the Morse code, radio as a career was not for me. On the *Arctic* voyages of 1924 and 1925 I often assisted, first Roy Tash, then George Valiquette, both professional newsreel cameramen, and learned something about writing from Harwood Steele, a published author, on the 1925 voyage. Partly as a result of those contacts I became a roving journalist and film-maker. In my new guise I sailed three more times to the Eastern Arctic to record expeditions on board other vessels: the sealer *Beothic* in 1928 and 1929, and the Hudson's Bay Company's *Nascopie* in 1937; and along the coast of the Western Arctic with the H B C's *Baychimo* and *Fort McPherson* in 1930. Those voyages had adventurous aspects but were relatively comfortable. None quite matched an *Arctic* voyage for danger, excitement, and hairbreadth escapes.

After 1925 Captain Bernier and his picturesque ship faded away. He went north again but only as an ice pilot as far as Hudson Bay. He never commanded another ship. In 1927 he was given a pension of $2,400 per year and a medal in recognition of his service to Canada in the Arctic – a modest reward for what he did to strengthen Canada's hold on islands whose wealth in coal, oil, natural gas, and metals was then beyond anyone's dreams – except perhaps, his own.

Captain Bernier, 73, has himself hoisted to the crows-nest to seek leads through pack ice in Cumberland Sound.

Nookudlah is reunited with wife at Pond Inlet.

The CGS *Arctic* fared less well than her master. Instead of being preserved for posterity along with Amundsen's *Gjoa* and Nansen's and Sverdrup's *Fram* in Oslo, and the RCMP's *St Roch* in Vancouver, she was summarily sacrificed in Quebec.

The Canadian government condemned her, apparently indifferent to her historical worth, and put her on the market. She was bought by the Hudson's Bay Company for the sum of $9,000, and the bill of sale was signed on 20 August 1926 by R. B. Bennett (later Prime Minister of Canada) as acting Minister of the Interior.

The purchase was negotiated by Ralph Parsons, then manager of the Company's St Lawrence-Labrador District at Montreal, who pointed out to his superiors that the main object was to keep the *Arctic* out of the hands of competitors in the far northern trade. He wrote that a Quebec group, one of whose members was Captain Bernier, had been desirous of acquiring the ship, and that Colonel J. K. (Peace River Jim) Cornwall, an independent western trader and promoter, had also been dickering for her.

An examination of the *Arctic* indicated that to render her fit for further northern service would entail the installation of a new engine and other extensive restoration costing at least $75,000, and she would still be 'an old ship useless for present-day commercial needs and the money would be wasted'.

In a letter of 3 February 1927 Parsons offered the H B C Governor and Committee a choice of one of two alternatives and requested a decision: either to sell the vessel's equipment and scrap her hull, or to make basic repairs and send her back north as a mobile post. They agreed to the sale of the *Arctic*, provided that Parsons

could guarantee that she would be broken up and not resold to a third party.

On 15 July 1927 Parsons informed the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company that the *Arctic* had been dismantled and a large part of her fittings and equipment had been taken for use at various posts; the anchors and chains had been sold for approximately $1,000, and the masts were also to be removed for sale. He added that the stripped ship had been sold for $1,000 to the Gulf Iron and Wrecking Company of Quebec.

A formal agreement for this transaction specified that the hull was to be broken up. Demolition was to start within six weeks after the signing on 4 July 1927, and if Gulf Iron failed to complete the task, the hull would revert to the Hudson's Bay Company and the price as well.

In his annual report dated at Winnipeg, 20 February 1928, Fur Trade Commissioner C. H. French stated that the *Arctic* had been purchased by the Company and later broken up.

That should be the end of the story.

However, William Choat, the chief radio operator on the 1924 voyage of the *Arctic*, paid a visit to Bernier in Levis on 10 July 1929, when the old captain, almost in tears, pointed out the ship. She had not been broken up. Just down the river from his home, she lay in shallow water alongside two smaller wrecks, her masts and gear gone, with only the shell of her superstructure rising above her hull. Choat photographed the dismal scene. The captain, distressed that the *'Arctic'* had not been kept intact as a museum, said 'Bill, don't look at her too long. It will make you sad as it does me.'

Stripped of masts and most of her removable gear, the 'Arctic' lies on a sand bar just below Captain Bernier's home in Levis, July 1929.

WILLIAM F. CHOAT

An article in *La Revue Populaire* of February 1932 left the *Arctic* 'abandoned on the Lévis shore' and this was the recollection of old-timers at the Quebec agency of the Department of Transport's Marine Administration some thirty years afterwards, according to Thomas E. Appleton, author of *Usque ad Mare*, history of the Canadian Coast Guard and Marine Services published in 1968.

A ledger of the Registry of Shipping, Department of Transport, Ottawa, records on one page the acquisition of the *Arctic* by the Canadian Government in 1904, and on a facing page her transfer to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1926. Significantly, there is no reference to any other owners. Across the first page is a note signed by Registrar A. M. Saunders: 'Registry closed 30th November 1939. Vessel broken up. C/R not delivered up. Advice from owners.'

The 'C/R' was of course the *Arctic's* Certificate of Registry, which may have been pilfered from her wheel-house. But why was the 'advice from owners' so long delayed? Choat's 1929 photograph shows that the *Arctic*'s tough hull had resisted any efforts of wreckers up to that time. It seems reasonable to assume that Ralph Parsons was content to let the ship lie on her Levis sand bar until the forces of nature, aided by foragers for lumber and firewood, finished the job by 1939 at little or no cost to the Company. And, inasmuch as the Company's fur trade commissioner had officially reported that the *Arctic* was broken up in 1927, why cavil at a technicality? Interestingly, when the 'advice from owners' was finally recorded in Ottawa, Ralph Parsons had become fur trade commissioner.

Dudley Copland, who began a new career as a writer after long northern service with the Company, heard a curious assertion while researching his biography of Dr Livingstone in 1966. He asked James Cantley, who had been Ralph Parsons's right-hand man in earlier years, what happened to the *Arctic*, and understood him to say that she ended up as a 'coal hulk' at some East Coast port — possibly North Sydney, Nova Scotia — where she was eventually scuttled by pranksters after wreckers had failed to blow her apart. But recently, upon looking at the Choat photograph, Copland suspected that Cantley had the *Arctic* confused with another old vessel.

Both Parsons and Cantley are dead, and no letter or memorandum has turned up in the H B C Archives to throw further light on the last days of the *Arctic*.

Regardless of how, when or where her hull disappeared, the *Arctic* as a seagoing vessel with her own distinctive aura ceased to exist when she was dismantled in 1927.

The only surviving, clearly identifiable part of the *Arctic* known to me is a brass bell that rang the watches from a bracket on the outer wall of her wheel-house facing the bridge. On one side is engraved GAUSS 1901; on the other, ARCTIC 1904.

Presented to my father by Ralph Parsons, this bell now hangs in the studio where I write. ◆

Bellot and Kennedy

A Contrast in Personalities

BY MAURICE HODGSON

Dr Hodgson, a graduate of the University of Essex, Colchester, is presently on a Killam Memorial Scholarship to work towards a biography of Sir Edward Belcher.

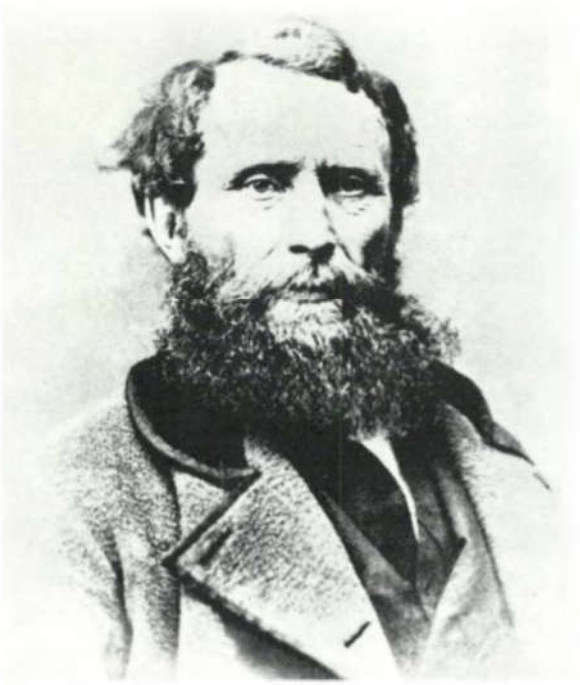
ABOUT A QUARTER PAST EIGHT A.M. (thursday the 18th) . . . he then lashed up his boots, and said he would go and see how the ice was driving. He had only been gone about four minutes, when I went round the same hummock under which we were sheltered to look for him, but could not see him; and on returning to our shelter saw his stick on the opposite side of a crack, about five fathoms wide, and the ice all breaking up. I then called out, 'Mr. Bellot!' but no answer (at this time blowing very heavy). After this I again searched round, but could see nothing of him. I believe that when he got from the shelter the wind blew him into the crack, and his southwester being tied down he could not rise.

Thus, according to William Johnson, ordinary seaman, died Joseph René Bellot, Lieutenant de vaisseau de la Marine française. Bellot's commander on his first voyage to the Arctic, William Kennedy, ended his arctic career earlier that same year at Valparaiso when his crew deserted him on the way to Bering Strait in the *Isabel*.

In 1851, Kennedy and Bellot, both volunteers in the search for Franklin, were thrown together in the *Prince Albert*. Kennedy, born at Cumberland House in 1814 of an Indian mother, was steeped in the harsh environment of Rupert's Land, and Bellot was fresh from African service with the French navy. Both claimed extravagant allegiance to the search, and personal fealty to Lady Jane Franklin. For her part, their patroness claimed them both as her adopted sons and though few people imagined that after six years Franklin could be found still alive, she was as optimistic as ever as she waved farewell to her youthful champions. Their voyage took them into the eastern Arctic and south to Prince Regent Inlet where Commander Charles Forsyth had abandoned his search – in the same ship – the year before.

The journals of the men are indicative of two very different personalities. Kennedy's is refreshingly short and objective; Bellot's is long and tortuous, and replete with morose self-examination. The brevity and casual style of Kennedy's narrative must have been the publisher's hoped-for antidote for the poor sales of the heavy tomes of some of the earlier searchers. Bellot's published journal was a compilation of his diaries; the first volume appeared in France in 1854 with an English translation the following year. The translation, by a French editor, retained the spirit of the original language, even to the extent of maintaining the ambiguities of Bellot's extempore jottings. Both Bellot's and Kennedy's narratives were remarkably successful in evoking the characters of the writers.

The scene at Port Leopold, Somerset Island seventy-five years after the search of the area by Bellot and Kennedy. Here, in 1926, preparations are made to establish the H B C Sikniik Post.



Captain William Kennedy.

Bellot could never eschew his nationality, any more than he could escape his notion of himself and his arctic role. Even before he left the Orkneys, he speculated how he would stamp the Arctic with the name of France and with the names of his family and friends. A small, neat, cherubic young man, he was obsessed by the possibility that he might prove unequal to the challenge. Despite his naval experience he was sick as the tiny *Prince Albert* pitched its way across the Atlantic. 'Alas! in vain I try to conceal it from myself, I am sea-sick' he wrote. He started a rigorous program of self-denial, almost scourging himself: he slept on a mattress a few centimeters thick, and covered himself with a single blanket. He refused coffee, declaring that physical wants were but habit. He despaired when first his sight started to fail and then his hearing until, finally, his body rebelled against the harsh regimen, and he fell ill.

Kennedy had more respect for the environment. He brought to the amphibious search the experience which hitherto had been confined to the arctic mainland. He employed dogs to haul sledges, made his crew manufacture their own snowshoes in the winter — when other naval detachments would have been preparing theatricals — and instituted winter travelling by moonlight. Kennedy's strength became apparent in his actions. On 9 September, Kennedy, with a boat's crew, pulled for Port Leopold to examine the notices left by earlier expeditions. The *Prince Albert*, with Bellot in charge, was suddenly blown south into Prince Regent Inlet and disappeared from view. After some indecision, Bellot finally brought the ship into winter quarters in Batty Bay about 40 miles south of Port Leopold. Bellot was not able to reach Kennedy — the latter having no idea where his ship had gone — until 17 October. In the interval, Kennedy had retrieved supplies from the depot at Whaler Point, made a shelter by upturning James Clark Ross's launch, and produced shoes from canvas and a winter sledge. Lady Franklin's faith, and Sir Edward Belcher's assertion that 'Kennedy is better than any of your Backs and Raes' seem to have been well founded.

Bellot, too, in this instance proved his worth. After two unsuccessful attempts to reach Port Leopold, he finally managed with the aid of seven men, to drag the jolly boat over and around the bay ice to Kennedy. But where Kennedy showed concern for communal safety, Bellot shone in individual endeavour. As Bellot's party caught sight of the men at the depot he bolted. 'I could resist no longer, and set off at full speed, promising my companions that I would speedily bring them certainty.' Bellot returned triumphant to the *Prince Albert* and wrote in his diary 'Hurrah! I have returned, and am at last happy, having brought Mr. Kennedy and his fair men back in perfect health.' There is little room in his triumph for the others.

However, both Kennedy and the Arctic worked on Bellot's susceptible nature. In methods of travel, he adopted Kennedy's system of using dogs and laying depots along the intended spring-journey trails. Kennedy, seldom admitting weakness, returned Bellot's fealty by patronizing him. 'Mr. Bellot makes daily pilgrimages to a hill in the neighbourhood, where he occasionally succeeds in getting a meridian observation of the sun, and *always* succeeds in getting his hands frozen in the operation.' More subtly, Kennedy's strong religious fundamentalism and the pervasive reality of the Arctic eroded Bellot's Catholicism. In a burst of self-doubt, he claimed to be a rationalist; then, his youthful imagination betrayed him when the old arctic hands on board the *Prince Albert* told him stories of cannibalism. 'Oh, disinherited races!' he wrote 'what have you done to heaven, and what vengeance is wreaked upon your heads?' His feelings for the environmental are expressed in romantic fantasy. 'The sky has improved a little in appearance, but nothing has been wanting to these obsequies of the departed sun, neither the sobs of the weeping winds, nor the mournful looks of day without light. Ossian is truly the poet of the north — of that Nature which moulds the thoughts of men after her own image, and makes them wild and desolate like herself.'

Just as Bellot's diary described the influence of a hostile, but fascinating environment, so it traced the development of his relationship to Kennedy and the others on the expedition. At twenty-five, Bellot had been placed in charge of men older and more experienced than himself. This, combined with his propensity to compensate for his assumed physical

inferiority, made him, at one moment, long for an expedition made up of officers alone and to rhapsodize about the advantages of education; then, at the next, to fawn on the men to accept him. This desire to be accepted resolved itself as Bellot became almost a mascot to the men. He appeared to relish the attention and attendant security.

This warm drink revived us more than the pemmican, to which I alone added a little biscuit, the men having slipped a few pieces into the provision bag . . . because they thought that, not being accustomed to an exclusively meat diet, it might disagree with me. Many a time in this short trip I had reason to be inwardly grateful for such delicate attentions, which are always the more touching when they are offered by persons outwardly rough; and the first night, when I was half asleep, I saw them, one after another, come and wrap me up, and make sure that my feet were not frozen.

It must have been difficult to maintain discipline from such a position of dependence, and even more difficult to pursue his personal dictum which demanded courage and individuality. Kennedy carried the men's jocund attitude one step further by exaggerating Bellot's role, thus underlining the latter's inferiority.

A London Omnibus, on a racing day after five o'clock, was the only parallel I could think of to our attempt to stow thirteen men, including our colossal carpenter, into a tent intended for six. At last, after some deliberation, it was arranged that we should sit down six in a row, on each side, which would leave us about three feet clear to stretch our legs. Mr. Bellot, who formed the thirteenth, being the most compact and *stowable of* the party, agreed to squeeze in underneath them, stipulating only for a clear foot square for his head alongside the tea-kettle . . . 'Kenneth, you monster, take that clumsy foot of yours off my stomach, will you?' cries out poor Mr. Bellot, smothered beneath the weight of four-and-twenty legs, upon which the carpenter, in his eagerness to comply, probably drives his foot into Mr. Bellot's eye.
And, so passing the song and the joke around – Mr. Bellot, occasionally making a sudden desperate effort to get up, and settling down again in despair – with a long 'blow' like a grampus – we make what Anderson calls 'a night of it'.

Kennedy was always aware of Bellot's usefulness to the expedition and ready to praise his energy and spirit. Bellot, on his part, criticized Kennedy for his stubbornness and his religious intolerance, but Kennedy's simplicity moved him: 'he does not belong to our time,

A section of Bellot's map, outlining the journey by sledge around Somerset Island.

Lieutenant J. R. Bellot.

and his perfectly primitive education has made him too good to lead men of our days!'

This mutual respect helped them to complete one of the longest sledge journeys to that date, a total of 1,100 miles: south to Brentford Bay, west to Prince of Wales Island, north to Cape Walker and, circling North Somerset, back to winter quarters at Batty Bay. However, there was some serious conflict on the journey. At the neck of land which separates present-day Somerset Island from Boothia Peninsula they discovered what Kennedy named Bellot Strait. Bellot, though acknowledging that a compliment was being paid him, refused to accept the existence of the strait because the moving ice and fog obscured the sight. In his diary, Bellot referred to a cape, not a strait, and complained that Kennedy had a penchant for inaccurate observations. In fact, Kennedy's map was surprisingly accurate and even on the map which accompanied Bellot's narrative a strait was designated. But at that point on their sledge journey little was in accord. Even their dates were at odds for Bellot had them at the strait on 3 May, while Kennedy's journal placed them there the first week of April. The reason for the general disagreement at this point doubt-

Bellot Strait, August 1858, as it appears in M'Clintock's 'Narrative'.

less arose from Kennedy's decision to travel not south along Boothia, but to cut west to Prince of Wales Island. Kennedy gave as his reason his belief that Franklin could not have brought his ships down Peel Sound as, to Kennedy, there appeared to be an impenetrable land barrier across the sound north of Bellot Strait. Had Kennedy travelled south rather than west, no doubt he would have discovered the remains of Franklin's expedition and retrieved the written records which had been destroyed by the time M'Clintock got there in 1859.

Bellot's journal, personal as it was, allows the reader to trace the development of a sensitive young man faced with a novel environment amongst strangers and, not having been edited by its author, it has a spontaneity which is seldom found in arctic narratives. Kennedy's short narrative on the other hand is a forthright account of an experience which was a projection of his earlier life. Still, Kennedy's narrative suffered from the stylistic affectations of the period. He writes of dogs in a snowstorm whose 'strength and vigour were the reverse of impaired by their bivouac in the snow'. Yet, because of his thorough experience with northern travel, he noticed minute physical details of winter travel which escaped Bellot. A short depot journey described by Kennedy is sharply in focus, and is more like a similar experience detailed by Scott or Wilson in the Antarctic than that of an arctic traveller of the Victorian era.

> . . . we all trudging on once more in the old rough and tumble style of progression, till about midnight, we found ourselves standing under the lee of something which looked like a band of snow, but which, to our great gratification, proved to be the powder-house we had erected on shore in the beginning of the winter. A consultation was now held whether we should cut our way into it and pass the night here, accoutred as we were, or make for the ship, which we now knew could not be far off. Our decision was for the latter, and the only question now was, how to steer for the vessel. This, too, was decided upon at last, by each of the party pointing in turn in the direction in which he thought the vessel lay, and then taking the mean of the bearings. To prevent our separating in the drift (for some of the party had by this time got so benumbed with cold, as to be unable to use their hands to clear their eyelids, and thus had become literally blind with the accumulation of snow on their eyes), it was agreed that at certain intervals we should take the others in tow. In this order we proceeded for the vessel, and fortunately by the guidance of a solitary star, that could be faintly distinguished through the drift, got near enough to the ship to hear the wind whistling through the shrouds, and were thus guided, rather by the ear than by the eye, to her position, and soon afterwards found ourselves on board, where we were received once more as those from the dead.

Bellot was more successful than most journal writers in handling descriptive passages, but he lacked Kennedy's familiarity which allowed the description to proceed from observation and accumulated detail. Bellot, more poet than Kennedy, chose figurative language to convey the experience. 'After a walk of a few minutes the sight becomes confused, the air seems to thicken, objects lose their forms, and after many a fall one advances only gropingly, and, like the diver, under an element which is not his own'.

To Bellot, the search was not, as memorialists insisted after his death, a path by which he could satisfy his naturally altruistic spirit. More likely, the search offered him, as a French naval officer on half pay, an opportunity to pit the possibility of glory in the Arctic against imperceptible promotion in a quiescent navy. The first voyage a failure, he imagined new possibilities in a French expedition to find, in one venture, Franklin, a Northwest Passage, and the North Pole. That dream failed to materialize so he shipped out again with the British Navy and was drowned in Wellington Channel. Bellot was an opportunist in the honourable sense, an ambitious young man who, like the American, Elisha Kent Kane, saw the possibilities of arctic exploration within the framework of the Franklin Search. His journal was the record of the progression of ambition and personal achievement, combined with frustration and disappointment in his fellow searchers. In all, it is perhaps a quirk of fate that the memorial obelisk at Greenwich celebrates Bellot rather than Kennedy who, in Bellot's words 'left his business in Canada to come voluntarily, without pay, and command this expedition, in spite of the objections of a family which did not understand his disinterested zeal.' ◆

NORTHERN BOOKS

MARCUS AND NARCISSA WHITMAN, AND THE OPENING OF OLD OREGON

By Clifford M. Drury. Arthur H. Clark Company, Glendale, California, 1973. 2 volumes, 476 pp. and 435 pp., illus., bibliography, index. $35.00.

Reviewed by Erwin N. Thompson

Clifford M. Drury wrote a biography of Dr Marcus Whitman, medical missionary in the Oregon Country, in 1937. In the succeeding 36 years, he continued his research and writing on the American Board missionaries in the Pacific Northwest, uncovering a wealth of additional primary sources. Now he has written a two-volume, 911-page, revised study of Whitman and his associates. This work will be of special value to those who have not read Drury's several books published over the years, some of which are now out of print. In this newest biography he has presented a deeper, broader view of Whitman as a medical missionary, a teacher, and a man deeply involved in the American colonization of the Oregon Country, then claimed by both Great Britain and the United States. This last activity of Whitman's is the most important single contribution in this new study.

Marcus and Narcissa Whitman established their mission station at Waiilatpu among the Cayuse Indians in the fall of 1836. At the same time, the Reverend Henry and Eliza Spalding began working among the neighbouring Nez Perces. The two women had been the first white females to cross the broad North American continent. From the beginning of this endeavour, Dr John McLoughlin, in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's Columbia Department, extended his help and friendship to these missionaries, knowing full well that they represented the vanguard of thousands of Americans soon to travel the Oregon Trail.

For the next eleven years Whitman, possessed with unusual energy and strength of character, filled many roles: teacher of education, Christianity, and farming to the Cayuses; doctor to Indians, H B C employees, mission members, and white travelers; and, in the end, supplier to and booster of American immigrants on the Oregon Trail. It is probable that Whitman and his associates failed to realize that their very presence, their teachings, and their cultural concepts threatened the Indians' traditional way of life. Because of the very nature of Christian missionary endeavour as it was carried out at that time, it was the missionaries' duty to destroy Indian religious beliefs and customs and to substitute a white, Protestant way of life. These changes, compounded by increasing white immigration and a terrible measles epidemic, drove the Cayuses to violence. They attacked the mission and killed the Whitmans and 11 others in 1847.

Drury does an admirable job of tracing and interpreting the various tensions and problems that plagued the mission, some of which originated among the missionaries themselves. But not until well into the second volume does he come fully to terms with the possibility that the well-meaning activities of the missionaries were a threat to Indian culture and to their continuing existence as a people.

A great improvement in this new history is Drury's thorough identification of the vast array of persons who are introduced in the narrative. At the same time it should be noted that there are many minutiae that could well have been buried in a footnote or omitted entirely.

The greatest shortcoming of this important study is the endless repetition of data. The reader gets the impression that this repetition is deliberate, as if the author did not trust the reader's memory from chapter to chapter. Had an editor used a sharp and necessary knife, the number of pages could have been reduced considerably – an important factor in a work as long as this. Drury's style of writing has improved greatly over the years; yet he does rely unduly on exclamation marks and full capitalization to stress points that stand well by themselves.

Drury selected the illustrations for this work with care. Included are two previously unpublished (and largely unknown) 1847 paintings of Cayuses by John Mix Stanley. Drury also uses two sketches by Paul Kane said by some to be representations of Marcus and Narcissa Whitman. He makes a spirited defense of this claim, admitting that the evidence is somewhat circumstantial.

The index, at the end of the second volume, has been accurately prepared and is most adequate. Not so, the bibliography. While the author chose to keep it brief, it has important omissions, both primary sources and recent studies of Pacific Northwest history. Noticeably missing are the important and revealing Factor Archibald McKinley Papers in the Western Americana Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University, and the precise documents used in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, London, England.

Despite these small criticisms, the conclusion is clear that the author has written an important, thoughtful account of the Whitmans and their considerable contributions to the opening of Oregon to American whites.

Dr Drury has researched and written on the subject of the American Board missionaries for more than forty years. He has produced ten volumes and some twenty articles on the mission era, and is now transcribing the 130,000 word diary of Elkanah Walker, an associate of Marcus Whitman. Historians of the Pacific Northwest will be forever in debt to Clifford Drury, not only for his basic spadework but for his pursuit and capture of many important original documents.

Mr. Thompson is former Historian for the U.S. National Park Service at the Whitman National Historic Site, Walla Walla, Washington.

THE ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE, A CENTURY OF HISTORY.

By Nora & William Kelly. Hurtig Publishers, Edmonton, 1973, 318 pp. $10.00.

THE PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

By S. W. Horrall, Toronto, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1973, 256 pp. $12.95.

Reviewed by Hartwell Bowsfield

Before going much beyond the preface of the Kellys' book, readers will recognize that they are not to be treated to the long overdue, analytical history of the RCMP so badly needed. The Kellys proclaim a worthy purpose, that is to help

Special Constable S.M. Kyak, an illustration from 'The Pictorial History of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police' by S.W. Horrall.

Canadians become better acquainted with their national police. They note the need and the responsibility of the public to be knowledgeable about the working of the force. But having asserted this need and purpose they then retreat into the well-worn story of the Mounties, depicting the spectacular and dramatic 'get their man' incidents which acquired for the force 'worldwide renown'. After stating that there is criticism of the force and the police power it has acquired they confess that their book contains less criticism of the Mounted Police than history records. This approach can lead only to a surface knowledge rather than to the reality of the RCMP story.

What we have, then, is another public relations job for the police – not a history but a tribute, a commendation. Hence the story of the RCMP is not advanced much beyond the kind of history that Nora Kelly produced in 1949 with her *The Men of the Mounted*. Indeed the present volume might properly be called a reprint of the 1949 volume since, time after time, whole paragraphs, word for word, have been lifted out of the 1949 story and reproduced in the present book, a book obviously intended to take advantage of the interest in the RCMP during its 1973 centennial year.

Granted the book is 'up-dated' to include more recent activities of the force – activities related to spies, drugs, organized crime, *and* guarding the coins thrown into the centennial fountain on Parliament Hill. No activity is too insignificant for inclusion in a story which becomes a tedious listing of incidents in which the Mounties were involved. No attempt is made at reflection or at assessment of the role of the police in our society. The Mounties were present at the time of the Frank Slide and 'took a leading part in the rescue work'; the Mounties were there at the time of the FLQ crisis using 'their full resources' to investigate and co-operate. Nothing new is said about the Gouzenko, Munsinger, or FLQ cases or about the police, for the Kellys' research has not extended beyond the newspapers, the *RCMP Quarterly* and the annual reports of the RCMP. What is presented rather is a parade of incidents, cases, and manhunts, which has about as much excitement as a departmental annual report.

The Kellys are a police family. William Kelly is a former Deputy Commissioner who came into the force in 1933 and retired in 1970. They cannot bring themselves to deal with the slightest criticism of the force without becoming defensive. There is a family approach to their work contained in the one-sentence paragraph (an irritating style of writing with the Kellys) noting that 'The risk of death, like the probability of overwork, is not uncommon in the service of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.'

For the reader seeking for the first time a general history of the RCMP and wanting details rather than stirring or exciting writing the Kellys' book will serve as adequate. All the events are there – from the founding of the force in 1873, the building of the CPR, the Riel rebellion of 1885, the Yukon gold rush, and on through the technological advances in crime detection of the recent period. However, it will be a familiar story to those who have read about the force previously.

The latter may prefer S. W. Horrall's *The Pictorial History of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police* with its trimmed text and profusion of documents, paintings, and photographs. Horrall, the RCMP historian, covers the same ground as the Kellys in abbreviated form but with the same purpose in mind – to develop 'a greater understanding and appreciation of the accomplishments of the Force' and to counteract the 'superficial and distorted image of the police and their duties'.

Horrall's collection of pictorial evidence has been selected not with the art of the photographer in mind but rather to provide coverage of every aspect of the story of the police from policing the plains to modern air and marine services. Included is a section called 'The Living Legend' about the Mounties in fiction, comic books, and films. Horrall admits that the media have projected little of the nature of the real force, yet his text betrays a hint that the force is not ungrateful for the romantic and heroic image which the media provided. While critics and 'defamatory tracts' pass into obscurity the fast-acting and straight-shooting Sergeant Preston remains alive and well. The Kellys and the RCMP historian have no intention of tarnishing that image.

Dr Bowsfield is Assistant Professor of History and University Archivist, York University, Toronto.

HORNS IN THE HIGH COUNTRY

By Andy Russell. Alfred A. Knopf. New York, 1973. 259 pages. $6.95.

Reviewed by Clarence Tillenius

'There was Franklin Crosby, who was still a young man when his trail turned towards the pursuit of bighorn rams, and who was such a purist

that he hunted simply for the sport and really did not care if his annual pilgrimage to the Rockies ended in an empty bag.

When he finally killed the great ram that had been the grail beckoning him all those years, he was looking back on sixty-six winters. I recall him standing thoughtfully watching us prepare the big head for taxidermy. For a long time he said nothing, and then more to himself than to us he remarked, "Sheep hunting has kept me young. In a way I regret shooting that ram, for looking for him has been the excuse for coming. If I quit, it will likely be the finish of me." . . . He sounded a bit sad, as though he had momentarily been given a glimpse of the future; but then he smiled warmly and was his old self again.

Although none of us realized it, his words were prophetic. That was his last hunt. Through circumstance, he was unable to return and, true to his prediction, passed away two years later. Somewhere in the home of one of his descendants there hangs a great ram's head, a fine example of the taxidermist's art, a sort of talisman preserved to remind those that see it of a great man who was touched by the magic of the little red gods that dance and cavort in mountain campfires.'

In these three paragraphs of Andy Russell's *Horns in the High Country* it is told quite simply why men hunt Bighorn Sheep – and why the mountains where the wild sheep dwell exert so powerful a pull on men who once fall under their spell. Nor is it the stalking and the killing that are the fascination; whoever has spent time among the wild sheep and climbed above timberline to overlook scenes scarce paralleled in the world will never again be free of the yearning to return again, and again.

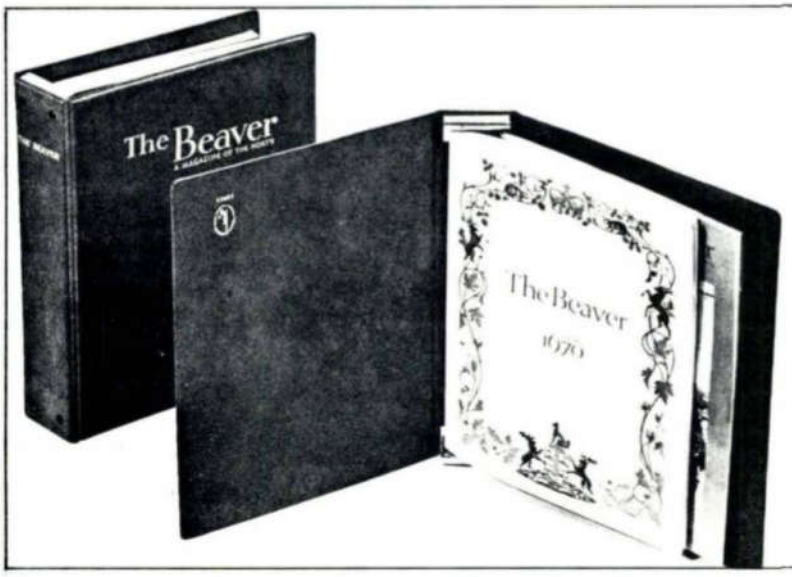
As hunter, as guide, as nature photographer, Andy Russell has lived since boyhood in the mountains he writes about. In his earlier years as guide and hunter, in later years as a photographer and nature writer, the wild sheep have been an integral part of his life. In this book the observations of a lifetime spent among the sheep are integrated with the findings of the handful of talented men who have followed the lure of the wild sheep in many lands.

In his compulsion to impress strongly on the reader the vast distances covered within confines of the book, Russell now and then taxes the reader's power to follow in the dizzying dashes from one terrain to another. But these are minor irritations and criticism dies away in the face of the fervent and glowing dedication to wilderness and its preservation that shines through these pages.

While Andy Russell is unfolding his stories of adventures among the sheep he makes constant side digressions to impress on the reader that the bands of Bighorn Sheep, the original and rightful inhabitants of the high country, are increasingly threatened by the growing encroachment on their range. Winter ranges are so often overstocked and overgrazed in summer by ill considered proliferation of cattle and sheep that the Bighorns – weakened by starvation – fall easy victims to diseases: scab, mites, septicemia brought by the domestic sheep and against which the wild sheep have no natural immunity. It is not a new theme with Russell. In many magazine articles, in his lectures, in his previous books *Grizzly Country* and *Trails of a Wilderness Wanderer* he has hammered away at this theme with tough-minded determination.

Essentially this is a book of nostalgia, redolent with memories of days now gone into history. Yet not altogether – the mountains stand as before, the grizzly and the wild sheep, though in number sadly diminished, are still there; and whoever reads *Horns in the High Country* will scarcely put it down without a feeling that he, too, has a stake in preserving what Russell has described so well.

Readers of the final chapters who have followed avidly along with Russell and his sons in the two-year filming of the documentary of the wild sheep, and who were saddened by learning that the film through some unfortunate circumstances was never completed, may have a pleasure in store. The difficulties which attended the final editing and production of the Bighorn films are finally in the process of being solved. At some early date the four-footed heroes of *Horns of the High Country* may possibly be seen on the screen in 'living colour' as they have already



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Clarence Tillenius is well known for his paintings, sketches, and museum dioramas that portray Canadian animals in their natural habitat.

VOICES OF THE PLAINS CREE

By Edward Ahenakew and edited by Ruth M. Buck, McClelland & Stewart Ltd. Toronto, 1973. $7.95

Reviewed by Grant MacEwan

At last Canadians are seeing some Indian stories written by Indians. That is good; at a time when policies directed at the native people are being assessed, the Indian point of view is extremely important. It is particularly gratifying when the Indian voice comes through in reasonable and just terms, recognizing that there are two sides to every discussion.

The book *Voices of the Plains Cree* is more than a study of Cree ways and problems; it reveals much about four personalities: Chief Thunderchild, who relates stories from his life reaching back to scalping and buffalo hunting years; Edward Ahenakew who recorded the reminiscenses; Old Keyam, who is a fictional figure speaking for Ahenakew; and Ruth Buck who, with a lifelong feeling for the Indian people, wrote the introduction and set the book in editorial order. It is difficult to say which of the four makes the greatest contribution.

Reading *Voices of the Plains Cree* brought back memories of 'long ago' when this reviewer, in company with Professor Arthur Silver Morton, the incomparable chronicler of western history, spent a night under the Ahenakew roof on the reserve at Fort à la Corne. The purpose of the visit was to locate and sketch the sites of the fort and other nearby posts, one of which Morton believed to be the fabled La Jonquière. Reverend Edward Ahenakew, as host and guide, was most helpful. Being keenly interested in local history, he had gathered all relevant information from the older people living on the reserve.

It was evident that this grandnephew of Chief Poundmaker had a great store of knowledge about his Cree people. He spoke with confidence about the battle of Cutknife Creek where Colonel W. D. Otter's force was lucky to escape annihilation, and about the circumstances leading up to the Frog Lake Massacre. He knew the Indian legends and admitted his hope to extend his writing. It would have been a misfortune if his manuscripts had gone unpublished.

Part one of the book is a presentation of the stories and observations of the Cree chief and wise one, Thunderchild, as Edward Ahenakew recorded them while sitting with the old man in 1923. The elder told of hardships and suffering in that area of 'feast or famine' when on occasion his people were reduced to searching for old bones which could be boiled for their grease. When one Indian was hungry, all were hungry because the tribesmen shared their belongings.

The Crees and Blackfeet were traditionally at war but the old chief placed that warfare in a rather different light. There were, he insisted, repeated efforts to make and keep a peace and, at times, the warfare took on an air of sport more than serious battle. He told about both Crees and Blackfeet exposing themselves alternately and needlessly as targets, laughing as they did it. 'No one was killed but everyone was shooting. It was wild fun.'

Thunderchild revealed himself as a man of wisdom. In describing buffalo pounds he was critical of the waste in killing beyond needs. In religion he was disappointed in the white man's narrow views, particularly when the Indian's religion was so similar in principle to the whites. 'Why' he asked 'has the whiteman no respect for the religion that was given us when we respect the faith of other nations? I believe in freedom of worship and though I am not a Christian, I have never forgotten God.'

In Part Two the reader will find special interest in Old Keyam's presentation of the Indian's side of the story of the Frog Lake Massacre of 1885. The white man's account made it seem that it was 'our thirst for blood that brought about the massacre'. There were mounting irritations which the Old Man enumerated: loss of freedom, disappearance of buffalo, starvation, and the arrogance of many of the whites. Then in the midst of these annoyances and frustrations there came word of rebellion on the South Saskatchewan River and it ignited the tinder of hatred at Frog Lake. 'What people, unless totally devoid of spirit, unless slavish for a thousand years, would not have felt bitter resentment, would not have blamed the white man for it all, for all the misery and all the degradation?' The Old Man conceded that the treaty was made in proper form and there was apparently the will to be just and kindly: 'yet at the signing there were men both white and Indian who were sick at heart because they knew the almost certain outcome, yet could see no alternative.'

Keyam's speeches were strikingly without prejudice. His sentiment was with his own people, but he saw two sides in the problems. The Indians 'can become a race of degenerates – a poison in the stream of Canadian life – or, through wise leadership, we can take our place beside the whites – Indians who are independent, self-respecting, productive citizens of a great state. I long for that . . . We have not progressed as we might . . . I am not blind to the Indian's failings and his weaknesses. We are a difficult people to help.'

Speaking with conviction that the foundation of progress, whether amongst Indians or other people, lies in the schools, the old man of wisdom was critical of the weak qualifications of teachers supplied for Indian instruction. Critical also of boarding schools for Indians, he saw them taking children away from homes and reserves and trying unsuccessfully to make white people of them, then sending them back with many false values, neither good whites nor good Indians.

Like Chief Thunderchild, Old Keyam spoke strongly for religious freedom, even for the Sun Dance which the whites undertook to halt by law. He believed that Indians were too long without a voice in the affairs of Canada. For too long they have been sitting silently 'as women in a Council of headmen. Some of the fault has been our own lack of education . . . permitting others to form opinions and shape policies that concern us'.

Let there be fewer restraints upon my people, the old man was saying again and again. Even though restraints were imposed with the best intentions, denial of freedom has no place in Canadian life. The native people should have a bigger share of responsibility in legislating matters affecting themselves.

It seemed to be the plea of both old men that their people retain the reserves and blend the best of the Indian past with the best of the new order.

Grant MacEwan, former Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta is the distinguished author of several books on the West.

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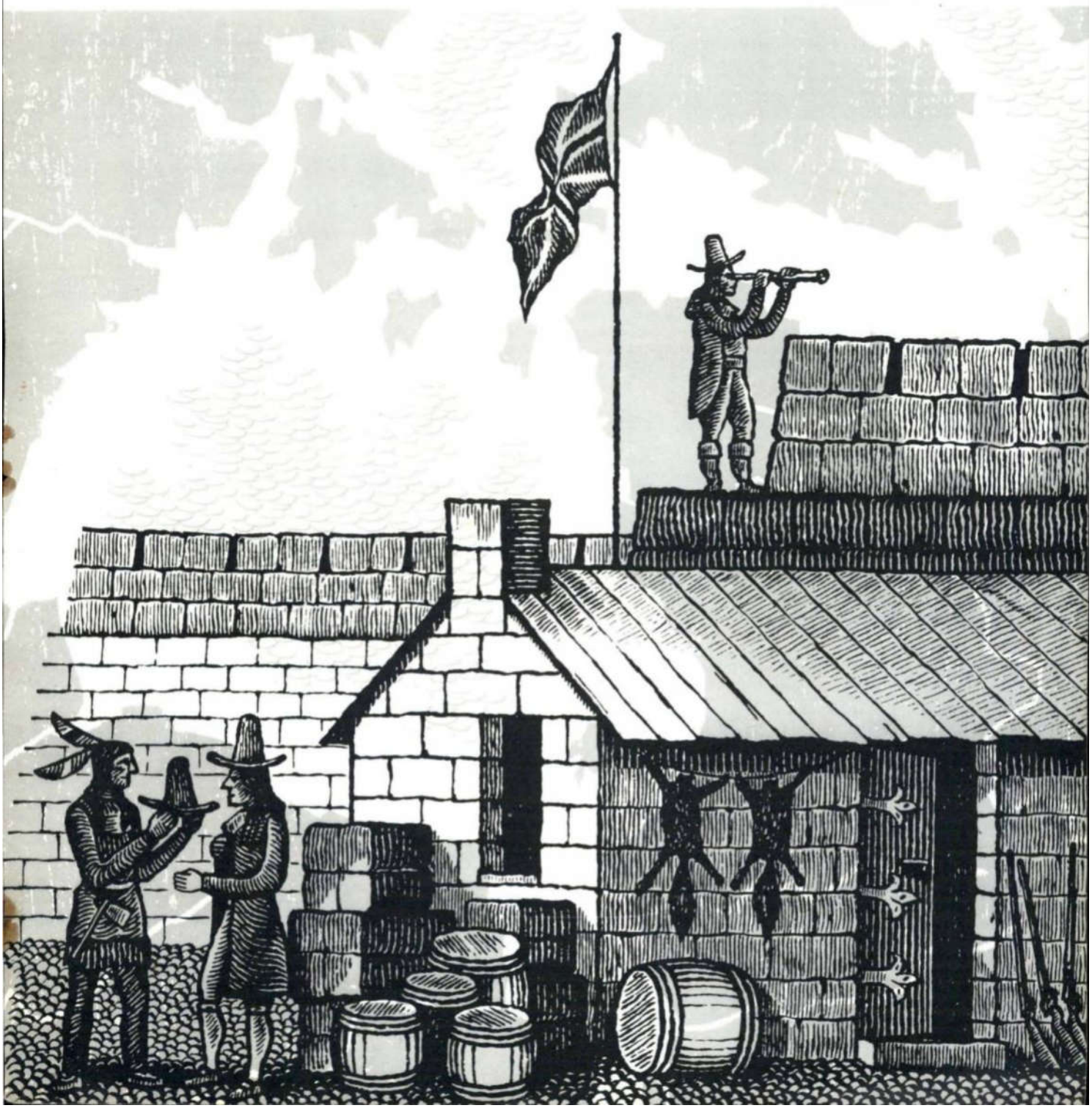

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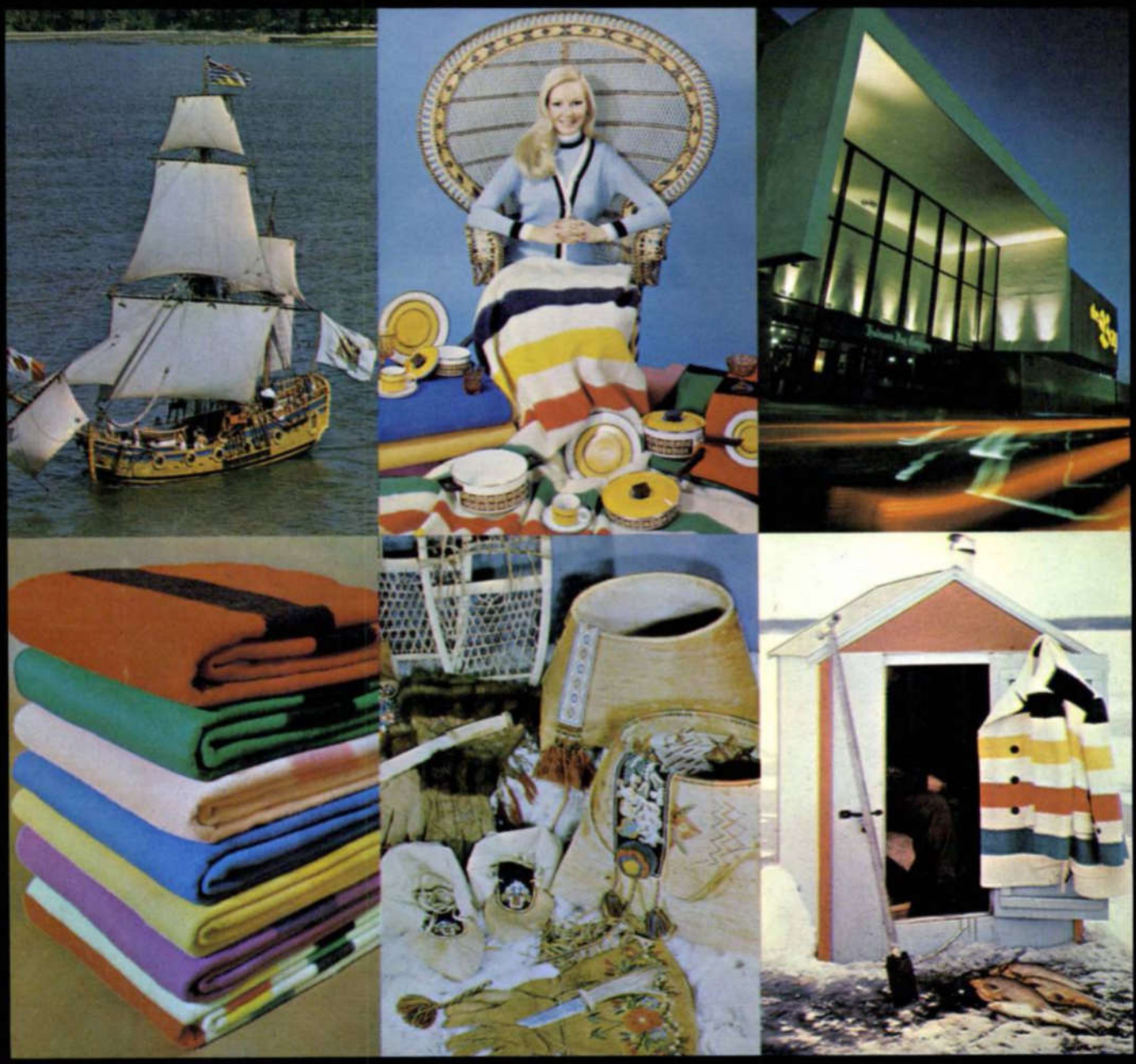

Available throughout Canada at The Bay and other leading stores. Or write to Blanket Division, Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg 1, Manitoba.

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